

Road Verge Nature Reserves in Oxfordshire

Survey Report and Management Requirements



May 2023

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What are Road Verge Nature Reserves?

Road Verge Nature Reserves (RVNRs) are verges rich in biodiversity, including a number of scarce and threatened plants and habitats. RVNRs provide connectivity between wildlife areas, helping maintain and restore a green network through which wildlife can move and survive. Green verges provide a vital link between otherwise inhospitable landscapes, providing benefits for wildlife and people.

There are currently 51 designated RVNRs in Oxfordshire, holding populations of locally or nationally rare plant species, such as Autumn Crocus and Meadow Clary, with a total of 5 sites under site specific management regimes. The verges are protecting valuable remnants of chalk and limestone grassland in the Cotswolds and Chilterns Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

Why do they matter?

Road verges can be rich in biodiversity and have many benefits for people and wildlife. Verges can be very attractive and show OCC's commitment to caring for the local environments of our residents and our responsibilities for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity.

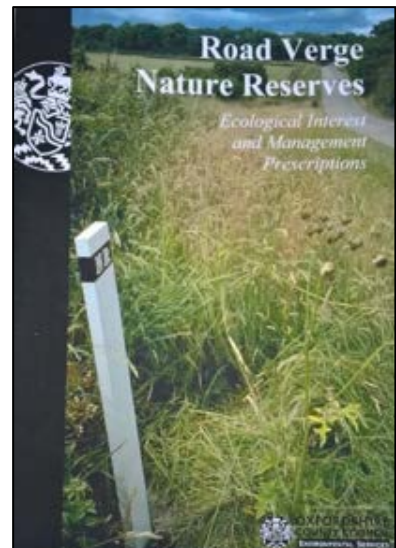
RVNRs are part of Oxfordshire County Councils legal commitment to conserve and enhance biodiversity. Section 40(1) of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 states: *'Every public authority must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'*. This duty has been strengthened through the Environment Act 2021.

RVNRs are often given a high value by local communities, with residents wanting to volunteer to carry out ecological monitoring and some management activities. There has been increased national interest in the value of wildflowers for pollinators and road verges as refuges for rare plant species. For example, the charity Plantlife is running a national Road Verge Campaign.

Background to Road Verge Nature Reserves in Oxfordshire

In acknowledgement of the importance of roadside verges for wildlife, Oxfordshire RVNRs were set up in 1991 following a survey of 55 verges to identify those of particular botanical interest. 24 verges were initially identified, and a report published in a manual which gave brief details of verges and management required.

Subsequently other verges have been added and information has been received from local naturalists about potential further sites. Please see a map overleaf of the current RVNRs.



Map of OCC's RVNRs



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There are currently 51 RVNRs located across the county. West Oxfordshire has the highest number of RVNRs with 26 present – South Oxfordshire has eight, Vale of White Horse has eight, Cherwell has eight and Oxford City has one. There are several different general grassland types that are present on the verges:

- Limestone grassland – the most abundant and located primarily in West Oxfordshire, these comprise of limestone flora including yellow rattle, cowslip, early purple orchid, salad burnet, agrimony, autumn crocus, milkwort, bee orchid, pyramidal orchid, rock rose, clustered bellflower, green hellebore, hairy rockcress
- Acid grassland – located in Vale of White Horse, these comprise of sandland flora such as common storksbill, purple toadflax, musk mallow, viper's bugloss, haresfoot clover, blue fleabane, sheep sorrel
- Neutral grassland - located predominantly in South Oxfordshire, this verge comprises of dry grassland flora such as clary
- Chalk grassland – located predominantly in South Oxfordshire, these comprise of chalk flora such as field scabious, bee orchid, greater knapweed, marjoram, dark mullein

Designation of OCC's RVNRs

RVNRs are designated following an ecological survey and consideration of other factors, such as road safety. A RVNR should meet one or more of the following selection criteria:

- Supports a species which is classified as critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, near threatened or Nationally scarce in the National or County Red Data Book or very rare, rare, very scarce or scarce (as defined by Day 2001).
- It supports a good example of a plant community that represents a habitat characteristic of Oxfordshire or is a Habitat of Principal Importance (listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006)
- It supports any animal species protected under legislation or supports a rare animal species or rich community of animals in the context of the county's fauna.

In 2016 it was decided that the available information on RVNRs should be updated. Verges were surveyed between 2016 and 2019. The surveys were undertaken by the County Ecology Officers. The results of the most recent surveys are listed in the detailed verge information section below.

After designation RVNR are marked by posts with 'NR' inscribed at the top, indicating their Nature Reserve status. In 2022 marker posts were installed at RVNRs 1-32, with marker posts to be installed at RVNRs 33-51 following their designation in 2023 following a review of survey data.

Each verge has its own specific proposed management regime developed to benefit the special wildlife of that verge. Due to logistical and financial limitations a total of five RVNRs are currently under full active management with the remaining to verges to be added incrementally.

Verges are monitored regularly through a survey visit every 5 years to ensure that their wildlife value is being maintained or enhanced and to inform the proposed management plan as necessary.

The option to remove designation is reserved for sites that no longer meet the designation criteria after 10 years of management.

New RVNRs can be proposed at any time by visiting [Taking action for the environment | Oxfordshire County Council](#) and completing the online form. Each proposal will be assessed against the designation criteria and assigned appropriate site-specific management as practical and required. Details including a map of the proposed area and photos should be provided where possible.

RVNR Management

RVNRs in Oxfordshire are managed by the Highways and Transport Team, with ecological support provided by the Biodiversity Team. The Crawley Conservation Group provides support in managing the three RVNRs present within their village.

The majority of RVNRs should be managed by a single annual cut at the end of the summer / early autumn (rather than spring when other verges are cut), so that the flowers have had chance to seed. This also provides benefits for invertebrates, such as bees and butterflies, with the longer grass and flowers providing breeding habitat and a food resource.

Ideally, the cuttings are to be removed from the site to maintain the low-nutrient levels of the soil. In some cases, it may be necessary to take a second cut in late winter to break down surface vegetation. Where possible, an uncut area may be left to provide over-wintering habitat for invertebrates.

Certain verges have differing individual management prescriptions to encourage the growth of particular flora that are present. Any encroaching woody vegetation should be well cut back, so the grassland habitat is not choked and shaded. The marker posts should be kept in place and replaced where necessary.

Core Verge Management Summary (as of June 2023)

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
1	Heythrop 1	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in late Spring. Ideally do not cut between August and October. Second cut in November.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in July to confirm presence of Autumn Crocus
2	Rangers Lawn	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in late Summer/early Autumn. Consider restoration of wall and soil stripping to restore low nutrient conditions.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
3	Shipton-under-Wychwood	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September.	Yes	Survey between June and July
4	Whitehall	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Strimming around marker post.	Yes	Survey between June and July
5	Signet	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Set blades high where anthills are present. Restoration by scrub removal.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of broomrape
6	Worsham	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile. Scrub and tree control required.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
7	Ashford Mill Farm	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Strim around posts and replace. Removal of scrub and creepers.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
8	Freeland	WODC	Cut and collect/pile twice per year in late Spring and Autumn. Control Bracken. Replacement of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and bracken control	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
9	Dry Sandford	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
10	Tubney	VoWH	Verge requires extensive restoration by removal of topsoil to allow re-establishment from seed-bank.	Pending removal of topsoil	Survey between June and July
11	Pusey	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Restoration may be required to improve species diversity.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in July to confirm presence of Creeping Bellflower
12	Hatford	VoWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Remedial cut and carry. The scrub species may need removal.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Wild Clary
13	Taynton Down	WODC	Cut and collect/pile whole width of verge annually in October. Scrub control in quarry area. Scrub clearance around northern post.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Purple Milk Vetch
14	Spelsbury	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
15	Spelsbury II	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September and remedial cutting in Spring may be required.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
16	Shillingford	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September, including southern verge. Removal of fegg.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and removal of fegg	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
17	Stratford Lane	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Some scrub control required.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in July to confirm presence of Wild Liquorice and Sainfoin
18	Burford	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September of whole width. Scrub control required and management of the former carriageway.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
19	Hailey	WODC	Full restoration of verge required.	Pending verge restoration	Survey between June and July
20	Middleton Stoney	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September/October. Some scrub control and restoration works to see if Meadow Clary re-establishes.	Pending collection/piling of arisings, scrub removal and restoration	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
21	Heythrop 2	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub control, particularly on former carriageway. Possible remedial work to encourage clary.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
22	Ipsden	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub control to remove Bramble.	Yes	Survey between June and July. Survey verge on eastern aspect of road
23	Ashford Mill	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of scrub.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
24	Watlington	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September/October. Scrub control. Blades set high to protect anthills.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
25	Middleton Stoney II	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Removal of any wood chippings.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in May for woodland species close to hedgerow. Further survey required in July to confirm presence of Blue Fleabane and Ploughman's Spikenard
26	Dry Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Consider deepening channel to re-direct road run-off.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and channel deepening	Survey between June and July
27	Leaffield Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Meadow Clary
28	Ridings Lane, Crawley	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
29	Britwell Hill	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of Dogwood.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
30	Cowleaze Wood	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Control of scrub.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Ploughman's Spikenard
31	Aston Rowant	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September.	Yes	Survey between June and July. Survey verges adjacent to motorway bridge
32	Ipsden Heath	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Restoration by scrub control and removal of arisings.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of Violet Helleborine
33	Hinksey Hill	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
34	Fullbrook 1	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
35	Fullbrook 2	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
36	Caps Lane, Cholsey	SODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in July
37	Tittenford Bridge	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July

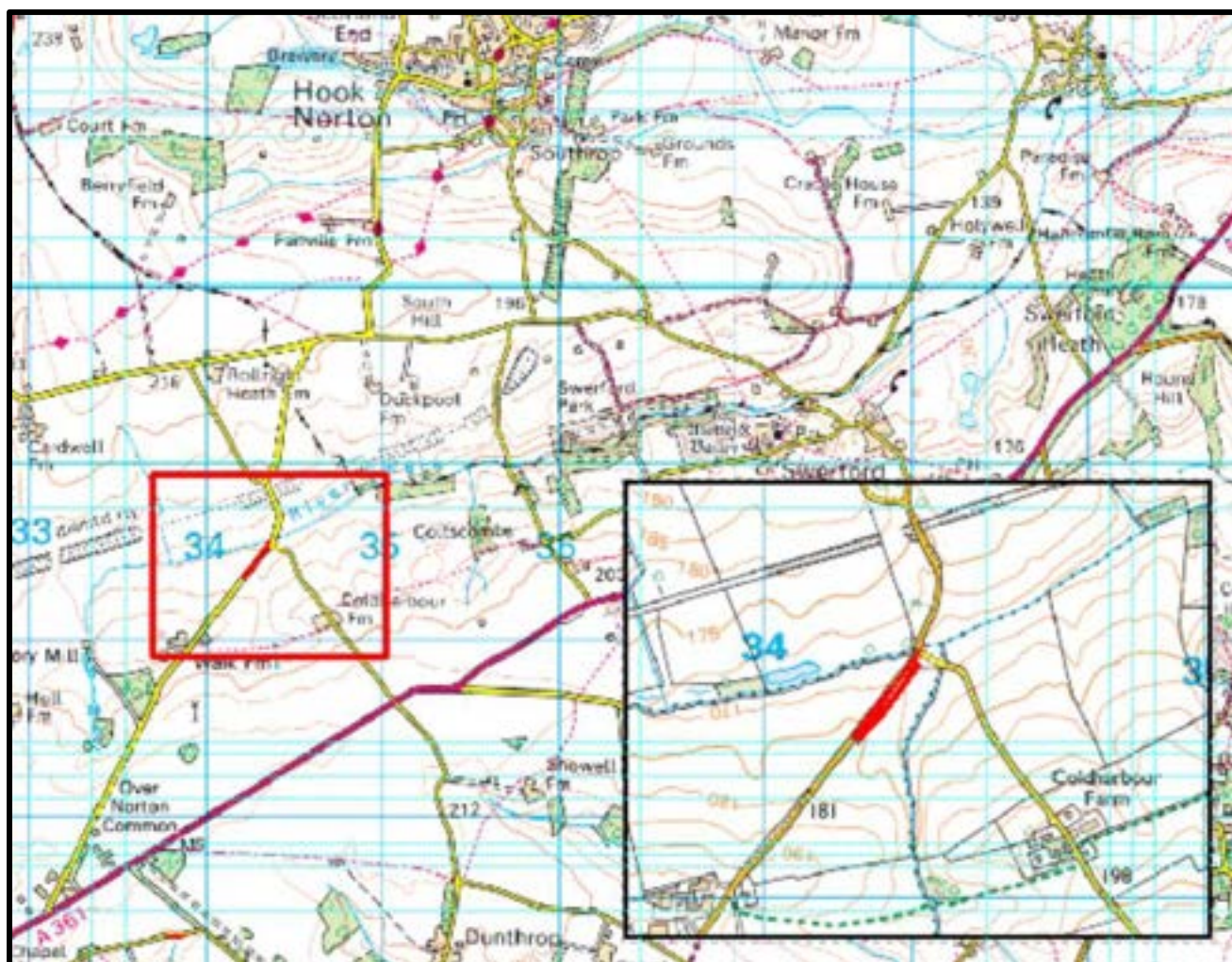
Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
38	Bridewell	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July to confirm presence of broomrape
39	A44, Bladon	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
40	Cumnor	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Yes	Survey between June and July
41	Linch Hill	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey in May to confirm presence of Cotswold penny-cress. Further survey required in July to confirm presence of Blue Fleabane and Dwarf Thistle
42	Peartree	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
43	A4260 Thrupp	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
44	Straight Mile	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
45	Adjacent Black Ley	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey in June

Verge No	Name	District	Management Required	Verge in active management	Further Survey Requirements
46	Upper Campsfield Road	CDC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
47	Rocksley Copse	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings	Survey between June and July
48	Stonesfield	WODC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
49	A40 Sandhills	OC	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
50	Marcham Interchange	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July
51	Milton Hill	VOWH	Annual cut and collect/pile in September. Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.	Pending collection/piling of arisings and scrub removal	Survey between June and July

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Verge 1: Heythrop (1)

Verge Name	Heythrop 1
Grid Reference	SP 343 304
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Swerford
Date of last survey	August and October 2017
Approximate Length	300m (on each side)
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry Ditch



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Site Description

A wide and flat verge on both sides of a minor road, with tall, mature and species-diverse hedgerows. A range of species have been identified within the verge, including Yellow Rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*), Cowslip *Primula veris*, Early Purple Orchid *Orchis mascula*, Salad Burnet *Sanguisorba minor* and Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*.

A colony of Autumn Crocus *Colchicum autumnale* was present, however this species was not found during the 2017 surveys.

The northern verge is less consistent in terms of quality compared to that on the southern side, with areas of more rank vegetation. Some areas of the northern verge comprise species consistent with damper ground.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Swere Valley and Upper Stour Conservation Target Area

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late Spring.

Do not cut between July and October due to presence of Autumn Crocus. Second later cut in November if possible.



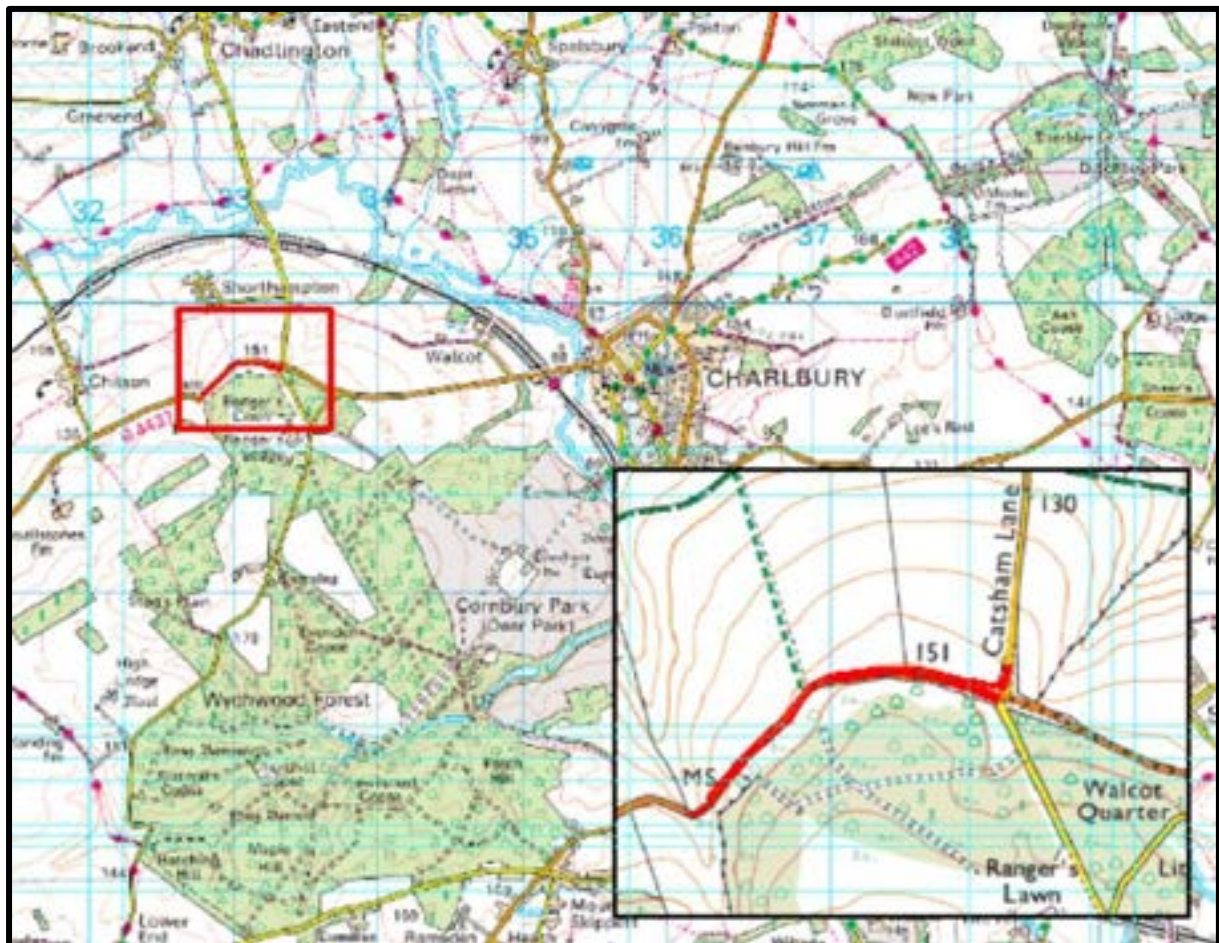
South-eastern verge (2017)

North-western verge in flower (23rd August 2020)



Verge 2: Rangers Lawn

Verge Name	Rangers Lawn
Grid Reference	SP 327 194 – SP 333 196
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Chilson / Short Hampton
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	600m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wall and hedgerow



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Site Description

The verge is along a curved section of the B4437 to the east of Chilson, with open countryside to the north and an enclosed park to the south. Verges are present on both sides of the road, with species-rich grassland on the northern side, extending to the north of the road junction. The verge becomes more rank towards the west and is most diverse at the east.

The southern verge is more rank in character, with lower species diversity and overall reduced condition. At the time of survey, the verge had been damaged by wall building activity, however, it is expected to recover in time.

Species present include frequent Sainfoin, Yellow Rattle, Restharrow, Cowslip and Pyramidal Orchid. Areas of poorer quality include nettles and Traveller's Joy. The southern verge includes occasional Salad Burnet, Restharrow, Rock-rose and Pyramidal Orchid.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area and 600m from Wychwood SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in late Summer / early Autumn.

Consideration should be given to the restoration of the wall, although it may be necessary to strip the soil to restore low nutrient conditions.

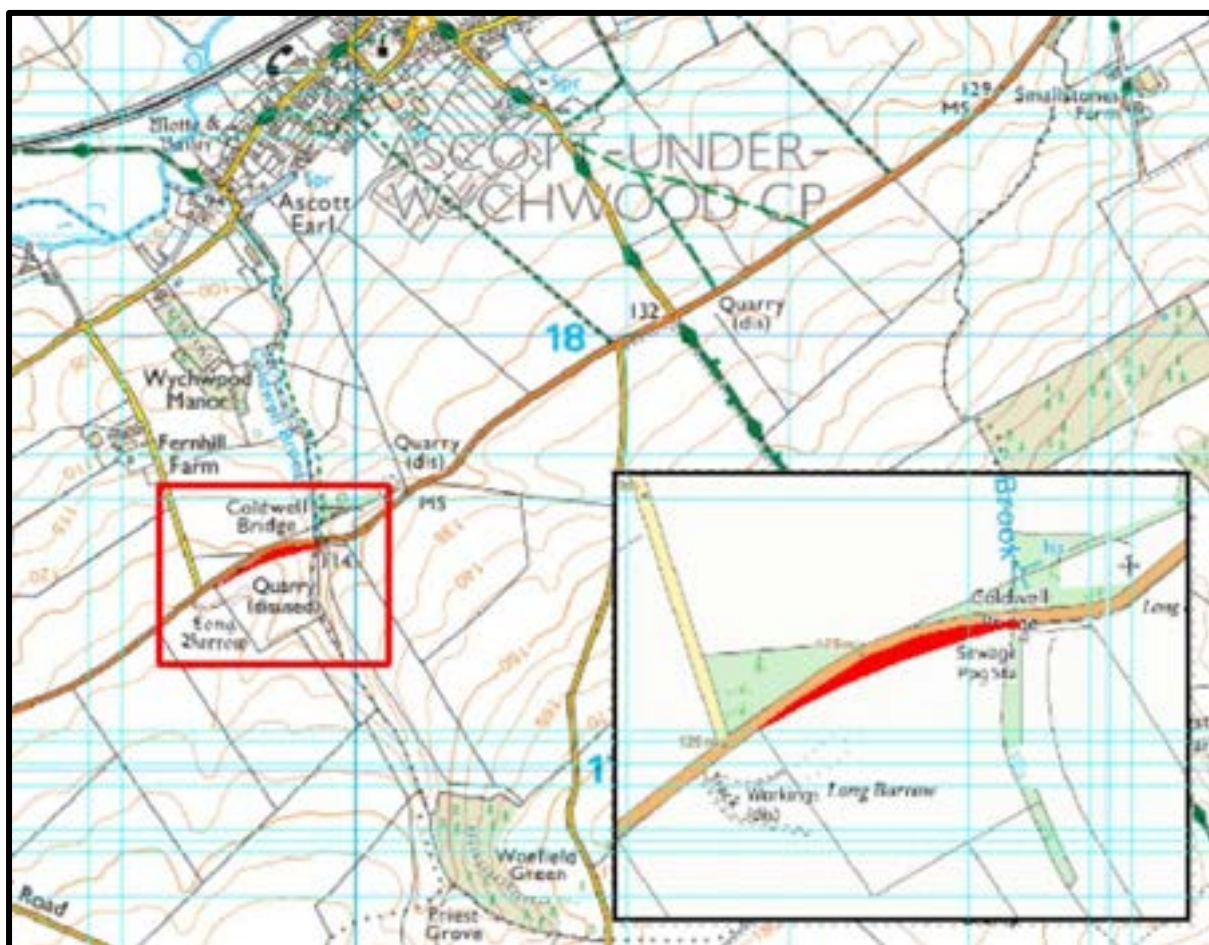
Marker posts were present at the time of survey and in reasonable condition.



Southern verge with wall and impacts on fertiliser drift on northern verge in 2016

Verge 3: Shipton-under-Wychwood

Verge Name	Shipton-under-Wychwood
Grid Reference	SP 297 174
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Shipton-under-Wychwood
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wall and trees



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Site Description

A wide and short section of grassy verge with a good species diversity, which slopes down from a wall at the top. Most notable is the presence of Clustered Bellflower *Campanula glomerata* within the central section, along with other limestone indicator species such as Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum* and Pyramidal Orchid.

The limestone grassland is largely confined to the central section of the verge, with more neutral species such as False Oat-grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* to either side.

The areas under the trees and at the edges of the verge are more rank in nature, with reducing diversity towards the west. Fertiliser drift at the western end and resultant nitrification may be a reason for reduced diversity.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge adjoins the boundary of the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area (CTA).

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

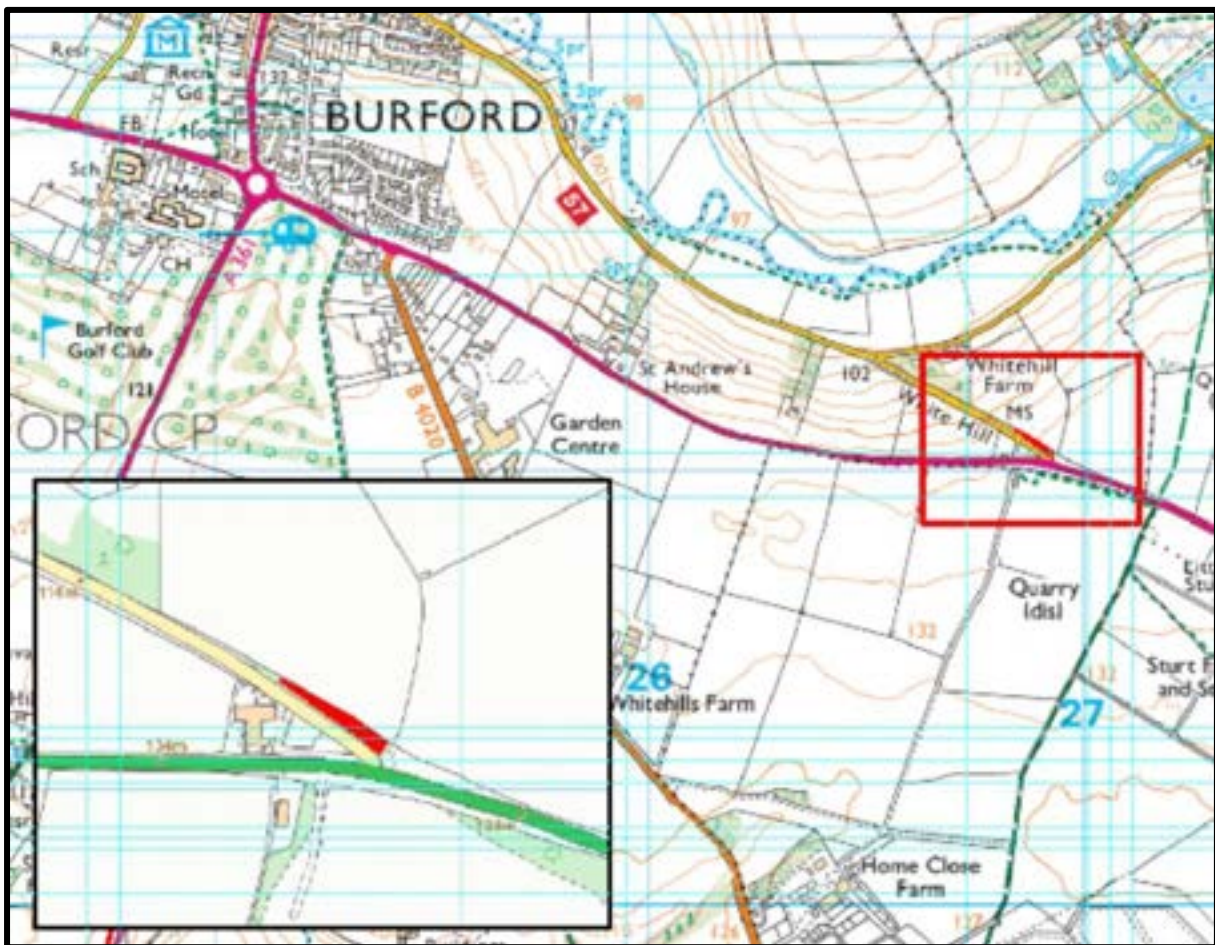
One marker post at western end only.



Clustered Bellflower and Verge Overview in 2016

Verge 4: Whitehall

Verge Name	Whitehall
Grid Reference	SP 269 111
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Widford
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A banked verge on a minor road (White Hill), which is in good condition with a well-maintained hedgerow.

The northern verge was found to comprise frequent Restharrow, Hedge Bedstraw, Salad Burnet, Greater Knapweed and Ladies' Bedstraw. At the time of survey it was becoming more dominated by grasses, particularly at the western end, however key indicator species remain present.

Thyme was not identified during this survey, with the vegetation now likely too closed. Common Lizard was observed, and a Common Blood-vein Moth.

The southern verge is more rank in nature, however frequent Meadow Crane's-bill *Geranium pratense* and occasional Scabious were identified.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 280m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September for both northern and southern verges.

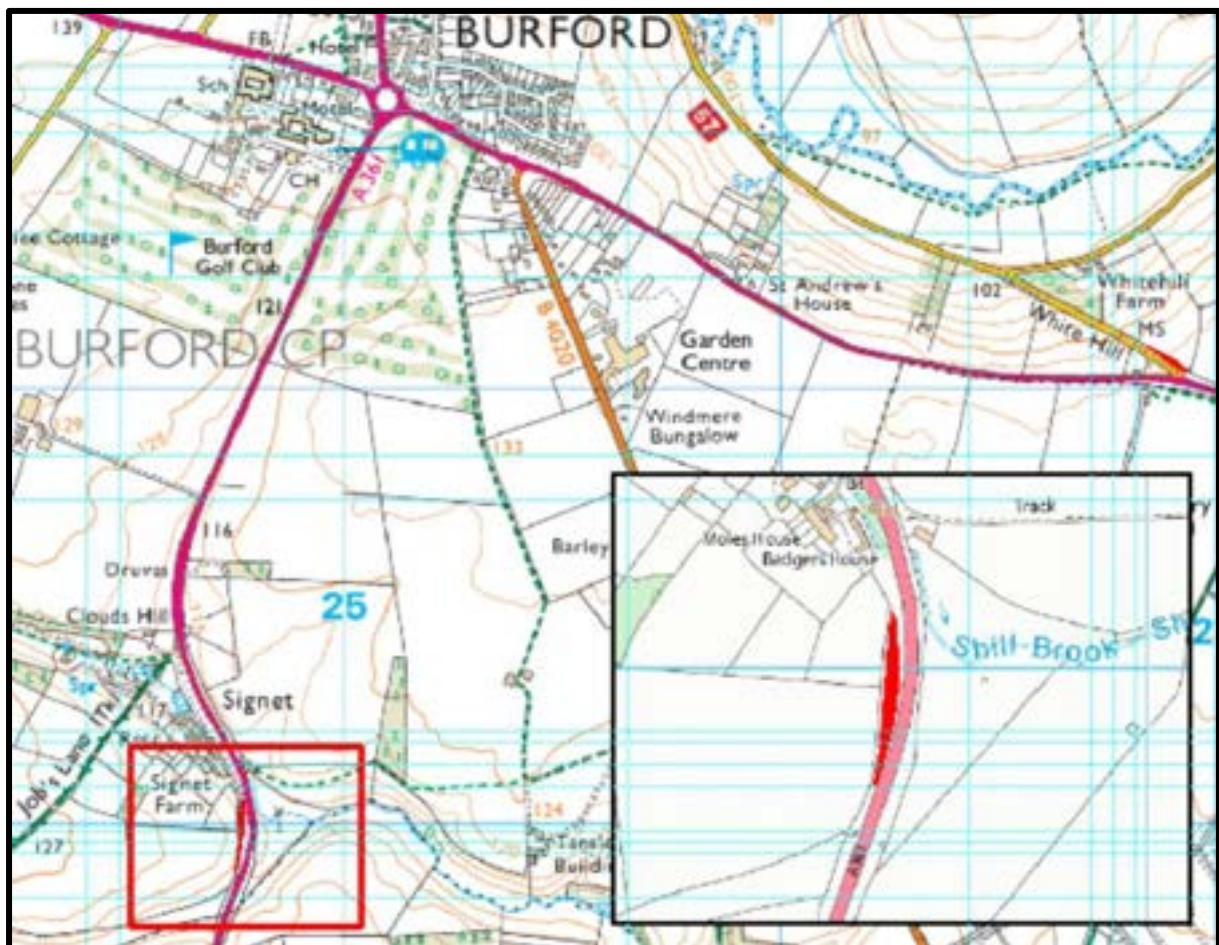
One marker post at eastern end of northern verge only.



Overview of verge from east in 2016

Verge 5: Signet

Verge Name	Signet
Grid Reference	SP 247 100
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Signet
Date of last survey	June 2020
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Steep bank and hedgerow



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Site Description

A wide and flat verge with a steep bank and hedgerow, located adjacent to arable land. Overall the verge was found to be in good condition during the 2017 survey, with tussocky vegetation and a significant population of Yellow Ant *Lasius flavus*, which is an anthill-forming species typical of old grasslands.

Felling works had been undertaken prior to the survey in 2017, with piles of chippings present. Removal of such piles is required to prevent nitrogen enrichment. During the 2020 survey it was unclear whether this work was undertaken.

Overall the verge remained in good condition in June 2020, however the recent hot weather had left the vegetation very dry. Key species including Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*, Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum* and Bird's-foot Trefoil *Lotus croniculatus* were present in good numbers. A small and very desiccated specimen of Broomrape *Orobanche minor* was present at the base of the bank. The plant was in poor condition, likely due to the weather conditions. Abundant Comfrey was present immediately to the north of the verge section, providing a useful resource for invertebrates, as clear at the time of survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the South Cotswolds Valleys CTA and the Shill Brook Local Geological Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, preferably with blade set high where tussocks and anthills are most frequent.

Restoration required, including scrub control and removal of arisings.

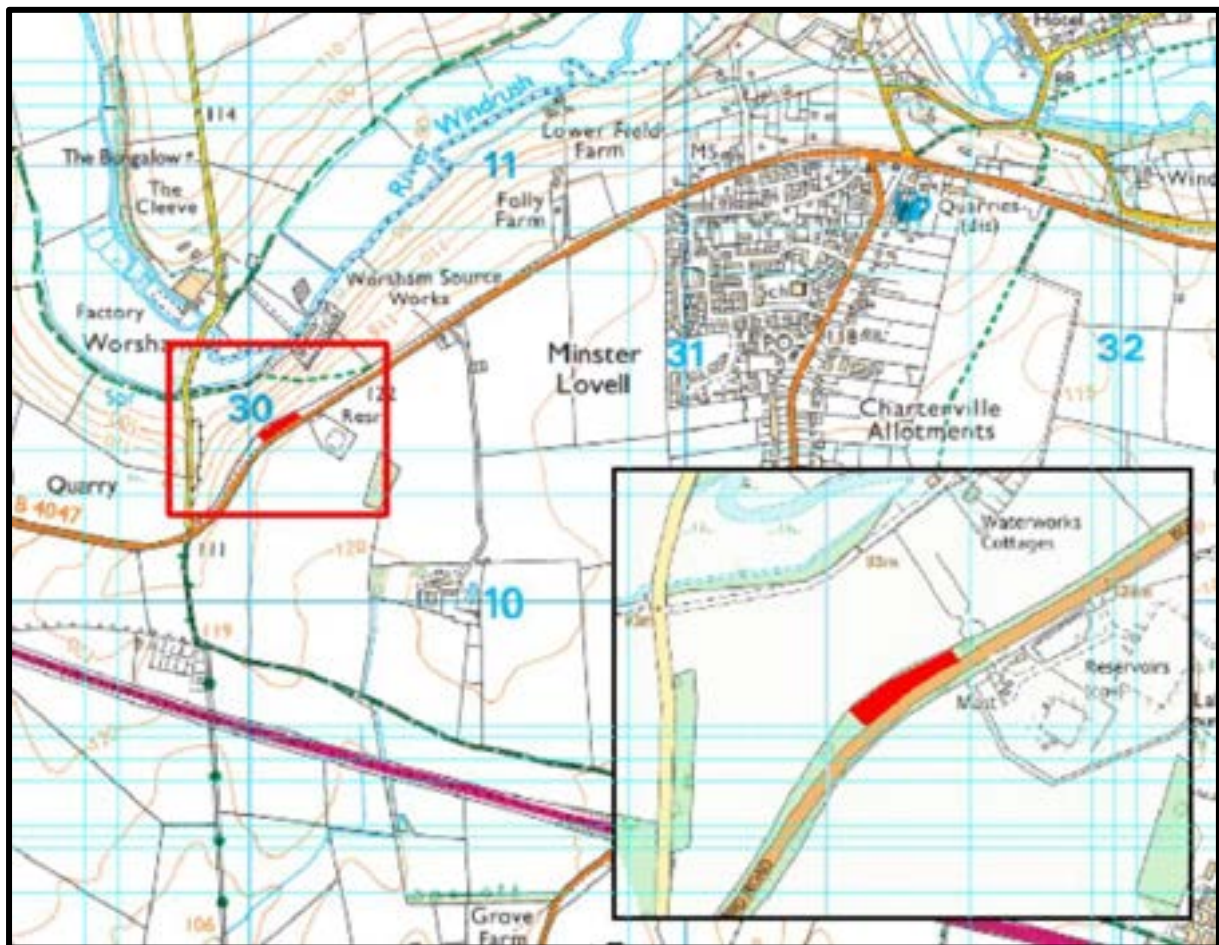
Marker posts present at both ends of verge.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 6: Worsham

Verge Name	Worsham
Grid Reference	SP 300 104
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Minster Lovell
Date of last survey	August 2017
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide, grassy verge with some scrub encroachment. A range of species are present, including Agrimony, Pyramidal Orchid *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and Ploughman's-spikenard *Inula conyza*.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and adjacent to the Pumping Station Local Wildlife Site. The verge is approximately 1.2km from the Worsham Lane SSSI.

Management Requirements

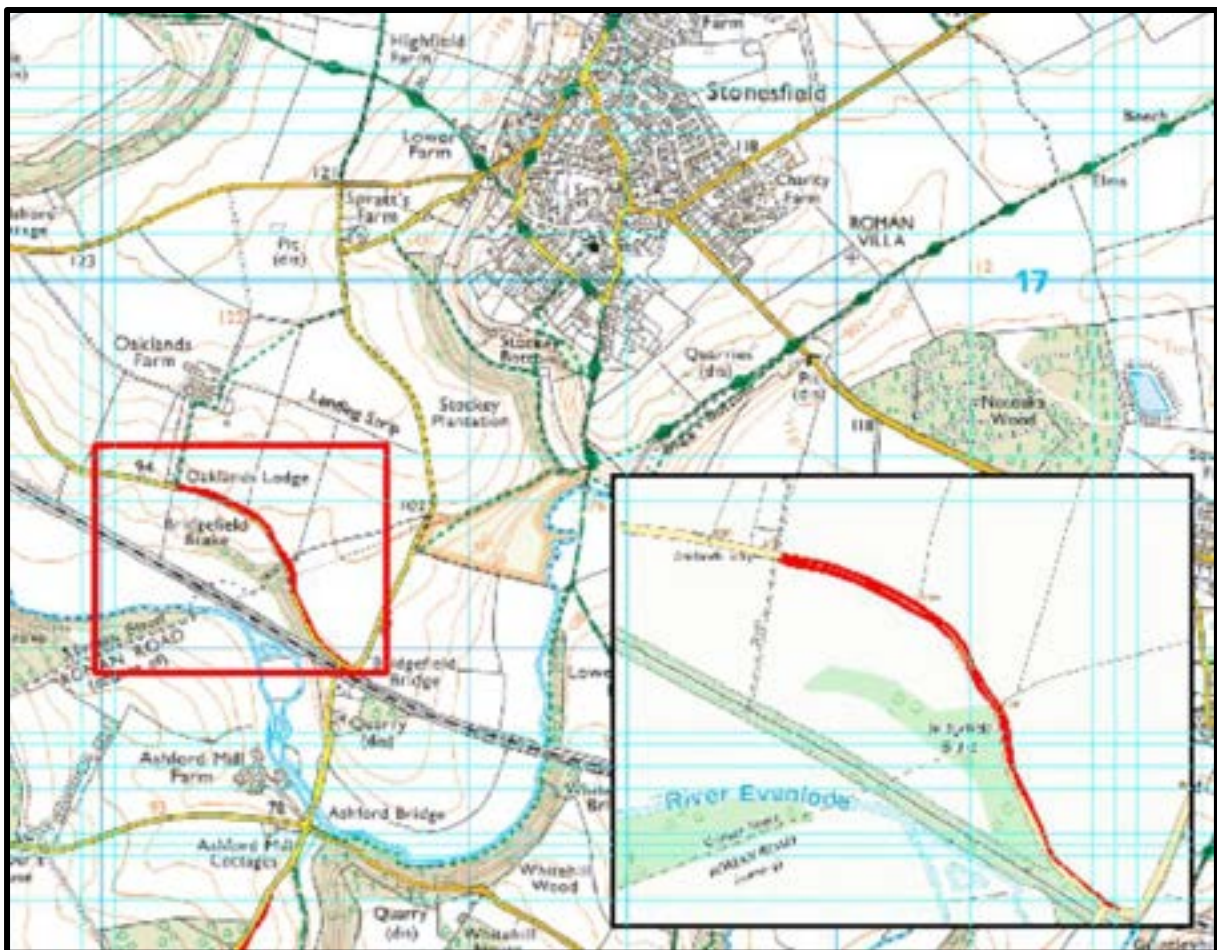
Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.



Overview of verge in 2016

Verge 7: Ashford Mill Farm

Verge Name	Ashford Mill Farm
Grid Reference	SP 386 160 – SP 382 165
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	East End
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100 – 700m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry-stone wall to part of northern verge, bare ground



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Site Description

Both sides of the lane are listed as RVNRs, with more of the northern verge included to date. The southern verge is more shaded and overgrown in places. The northern section is rank and overgrown in places, however it retains good species diversity. Of particular note is the presence of Wild Liquorice *Astragalus glycyphylus*. Other species present include Burnet Saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifrage*, Marjoram *Origanum vulgare* and Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum*.

The verge was in moderate condition at the time of last survey; however, it was becoming slightly more rank in places. Patches of Traveller's Joy were developing and starting to swamp the verge flora.

A public footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the North Evenlode Valleys Conservation Target Area, adjacent to the Bridgefield Bank and Brake Local Wildlife Site and the Stonesfield Common Site of Special Scientific Interest is located approximately 400m to the east.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September for both northern and southern verges.

Restoration should be achieved by removal of rank vegetation.

3 verge marker posts are present.



Eastern end posts, areas of bare ground and southern verge in 2016

Verge 8: Freeland

Verge Name	Freeland
Grid Reference	SP 407 121 – SP 413 117
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Freeland
Date of last survey	June 2020
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry Ditch



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Site Description

A long verge located along the southern side of Cuckoo Lane. In 2016 the verge was dominated by Bracken in places, with shaded sections becoming more grassy. The hedgerow comprised a number of mature trees.

Overall, the verge is now in rank and declining condition, with fewer key species present than identified in 1991 such as Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and Twayblade

Listera ovata. Fertiliser drift from adjacent fields likely to be problematic. The 2020 survey found the verge to be completely overgrown, without safe places to stop and park.

A public footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 300m from the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Restorative work is required to improve verge condition and reduce dominant Bracken, nettles and grasses. Bracken removal is required using an appropriate herbicide.

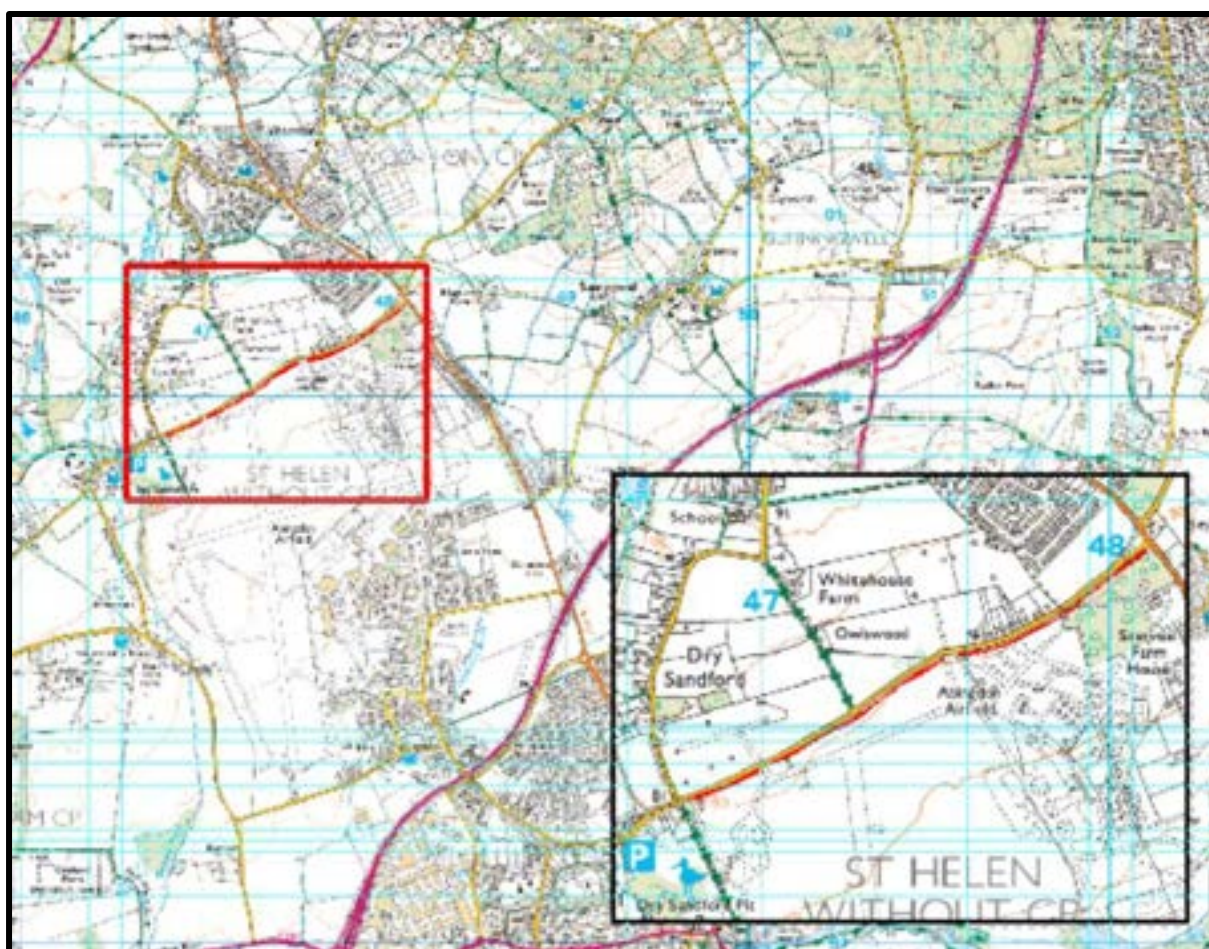
Cut and collect/pile twice a year, in late Spring and Autumn.



Verge overview in 2016

Verge 9: Dry Sandford

Verge Name	Dry Sandford
Grid Reference	SP 467 997 – SP 482 005
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Cothill
Date of last survey	July 2016
Approximate Length	1000 – 1300m
Key Habitat	Acid Grassland
Features	Dry ditch along western section of southern verge, hedgerow.



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Site Description

Verges on either side of Honey Bottom Lane. The verges are flat, with the majority of species interest at the ends, with each narrowing towards the centre. Overall, the verges are in good condition, however they become more rank overall towards the east.

Although some species originally identified in 1991 were not recorded at the last survey, the verges remain diverse and worthy of maintaining as RVNRs, with original species re-

establishing from the seed bank. Species including Great Knapweed and Pyramidal Orchid were recorded.

The central sections are dominated by False Oat-grass, which is more rank in character. Species such as Carrot and Chicory are present throughout.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The western end of the verges adjoin the Oxford Heights West Conservation Target Area and are approximately 100m from the Dry Sandford Pit Site of Special Scientific Interest.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

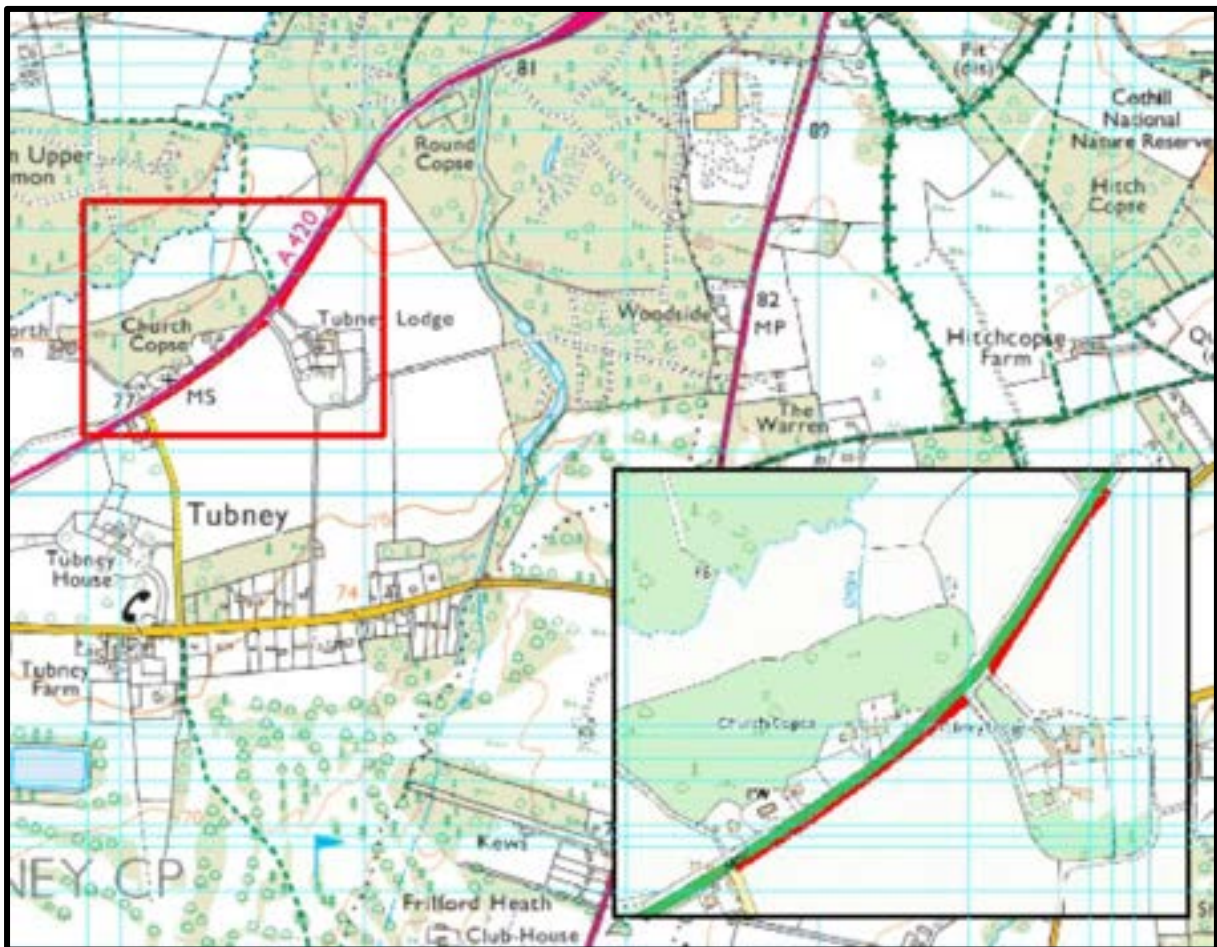
Scrub removal should be considered and more frequent cuts if practicable to improve overall condition.



Overview of verge in 2022

Verge 10: Tubney

Verge Name	Tubney
Grid Reference	SP 435 993 – SP 439 996
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Tubney
Date of last survey	July 2017
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Acid Grassland
Features	Dry-stone wall



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Site Description

A narrow verge along the A420, currently in poor rank condition. Overall species diversity has fallen since the verge was surveyed and restoration is required to improve it. No previously found key sandland species were identified during the survey, such as Blue Fleabane *Erigeron acer* or Sheeps Sorrel *Rumex acetosella* were recorded.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxford Heights Conservation Target Area and the Tubney Wood and Appleton Upper Common Local Wildlife Sites are within 300m. Frilford Heath, Ponds and Fens SSSI is approximately 500m to the east and south-east.

Management Requirements

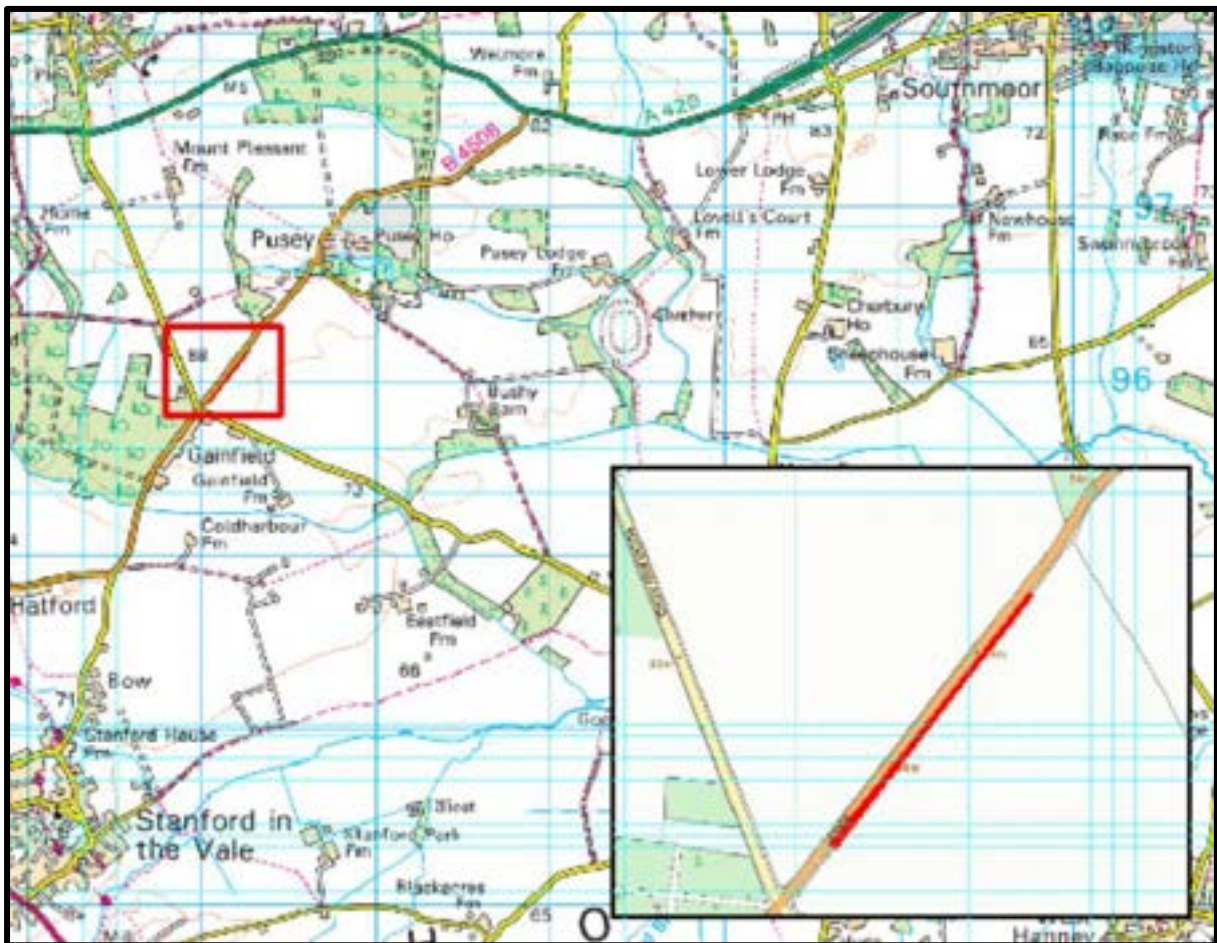
Restoration of the verge is required in order to remain a RVNR. Topsoil should be removed to allow re-establishment from the seed bank.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 11: Pusey

Verge Name	Pusey
Grid Reference	SP 351 959 – SP 353 962
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Pusey
Date of last survey	September 2018
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch, bare ground



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Site Description

A narrow verge on the southern side of the road. Overall, the verge is rather rank and dominated by coarse grasses, with abundant False Oat-grass and Cock's-foot. Species present include Field Scabious, Lady's Bedstraw and Burnet Saxifrage. Creeping Bellflower, which was abundant during the original survey, was not recorded.

The surface of the verge has been subject to disturbance, therefore further assessment is required to identify whether key species re-establish.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is in close proximity to the Buckland Warren Woods Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Following further survey, restoration work may need to be considered to improve species diversity.

One marker post present.



Overview of verge in 2021

Verge 12: Hatford

Verge Name	Hatford
Grid Reference	SP 336 947
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	Hatford
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	50m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A steeply banked verge along the B4508, adjacent to arable fields. The southerly facing embankment has frequent wild Clary *Salvia horminoides*. Other species identified included Field Scabious, Burnet Saxifrage and Lady's Bedstraw.

Overall, the verge is in good condition, becoming more grassy and rank towards the western end. A build-up of fegg was present during the survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxon Heights West Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Removal of scrub and arisings required to assist in improving the verge. Consideration could be given to hedgerow planting at the top to provide delineation from the adjacent field.

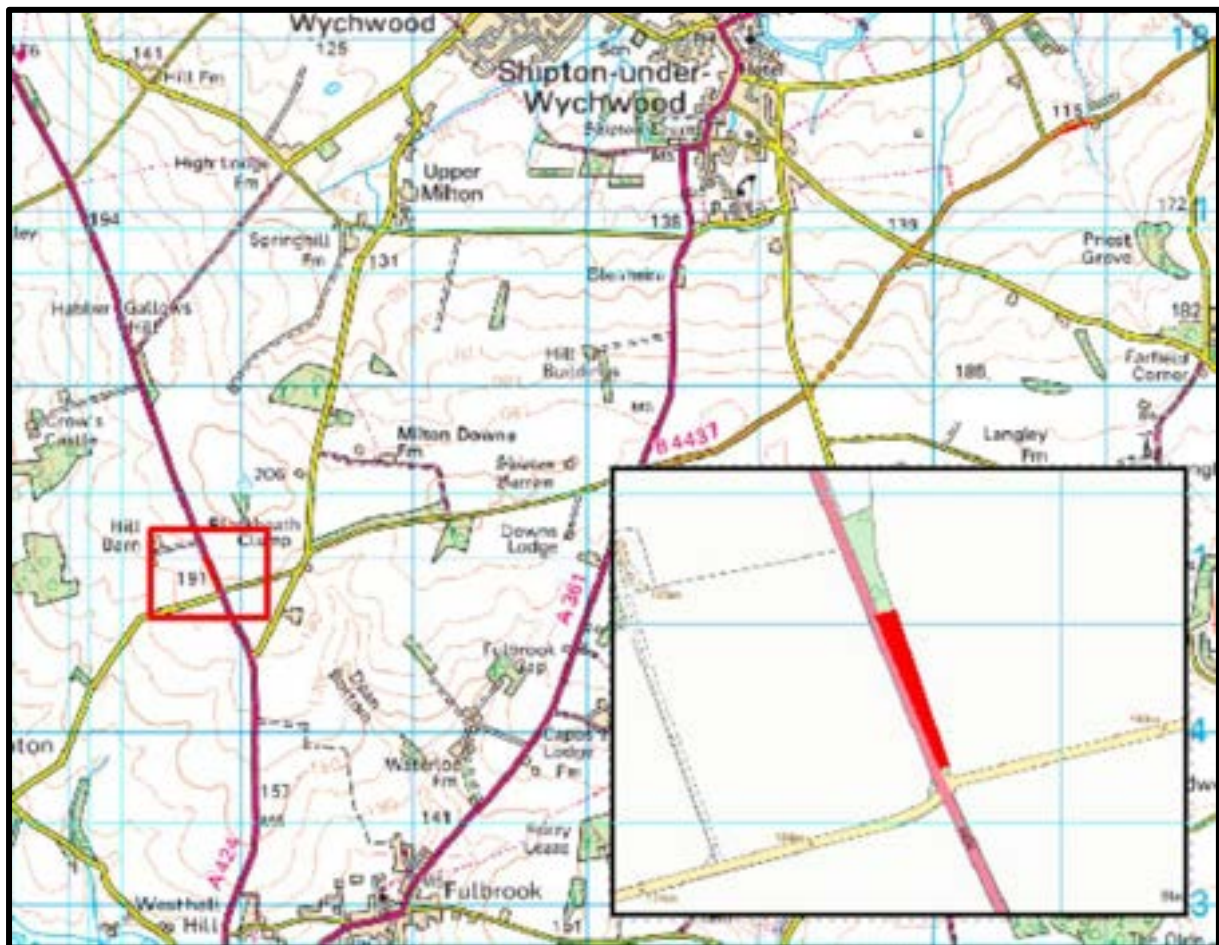
Two marker posts present.



Overview of verge in 2021

Verge 13: Taynton Down

Verge Name	Taynton Down
Grid Reference	SP 248 150 – SP 248 148
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Taynton
Date of last survey	August 2018
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide verge along the A424 with tall grassland and a small quarry area to the north. The quarry is overgrown and no Purple Mil-vetch was identified.

Within the grassland, several lime-loving species were recorded, including Common Restharrow, Burnet Saxifrage *Pimpinella saxifraga*, Meadow Crane's-bill *Geranium pratense* and Agrimony *Agrimonia eupatoria*. The sward is generally taller and more closed than at the time of the original survey.

Overall, the verge is in moderate condition, however scrub appears to be encroaching at the northern end, particularly around the quarry area.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Taynton Down Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in October.

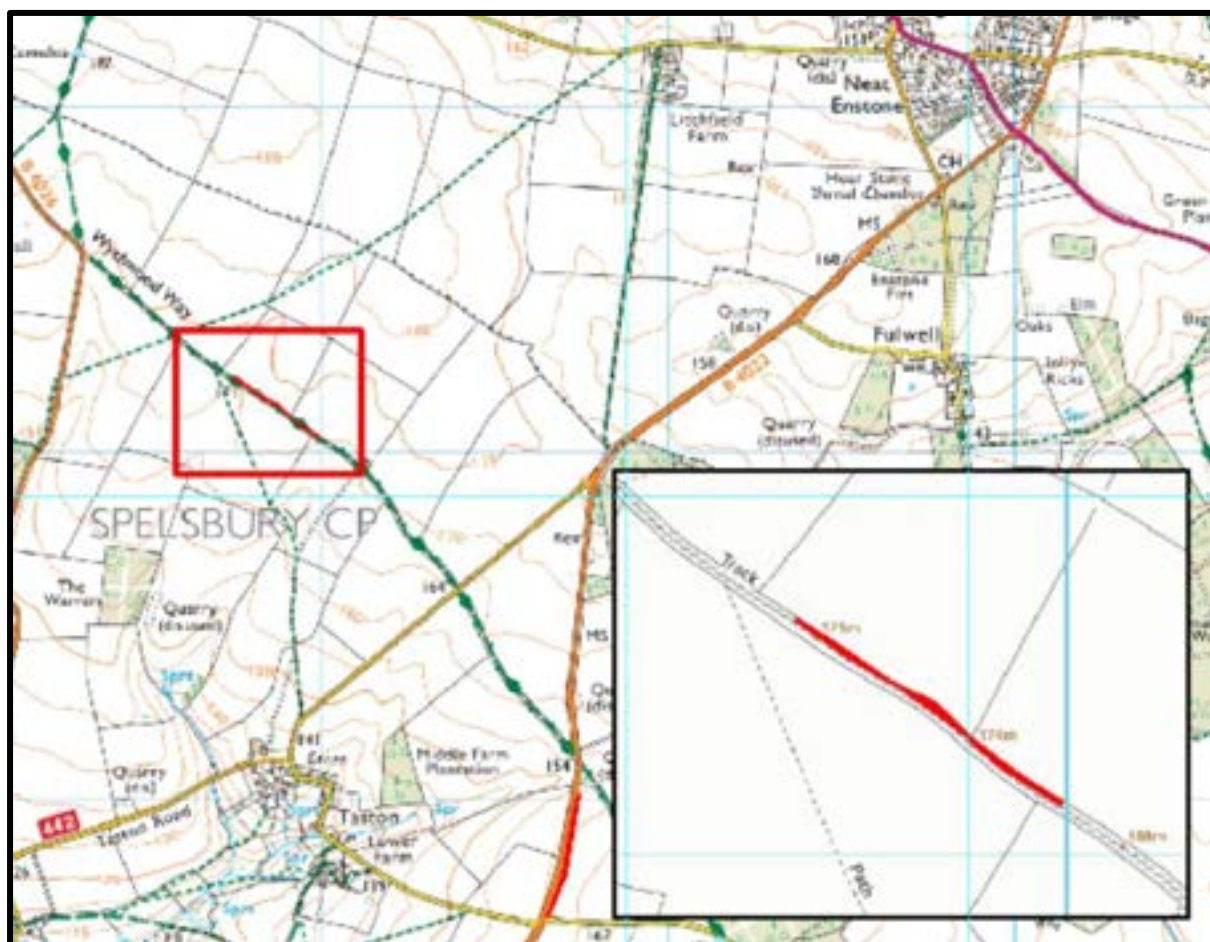
The verge would benefit from some scrub control.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 14: Spelsbury 1

Verge Name	Spelsbury 1
Grid Reference	SP 358 232 -SP 360 231
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Spelsbury
Date of last survey	August 2017
Approximate Length	1.4km
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry-stone walls, ditch, scrub



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Site Description

A green lane with hedgerows on either side, with stone walls between the hedgerows and adjacent arable land. A wide range of species have been recorded, with the key interest species Meadow Clary *Salvia pratensis* located within the centre of the lane.

A number of species of limestone grassland were identified, including Meadow Crane's-bill, Field Scabious and Greater Knapweed. Sections of the verge are more wooded and scrubby

in character. Overall, the verge was found to be in good condition, however it would benefit from improved management.

The verge is part of the Wychwood Way public right of way.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the North Evenlode Valleys Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late Summer.

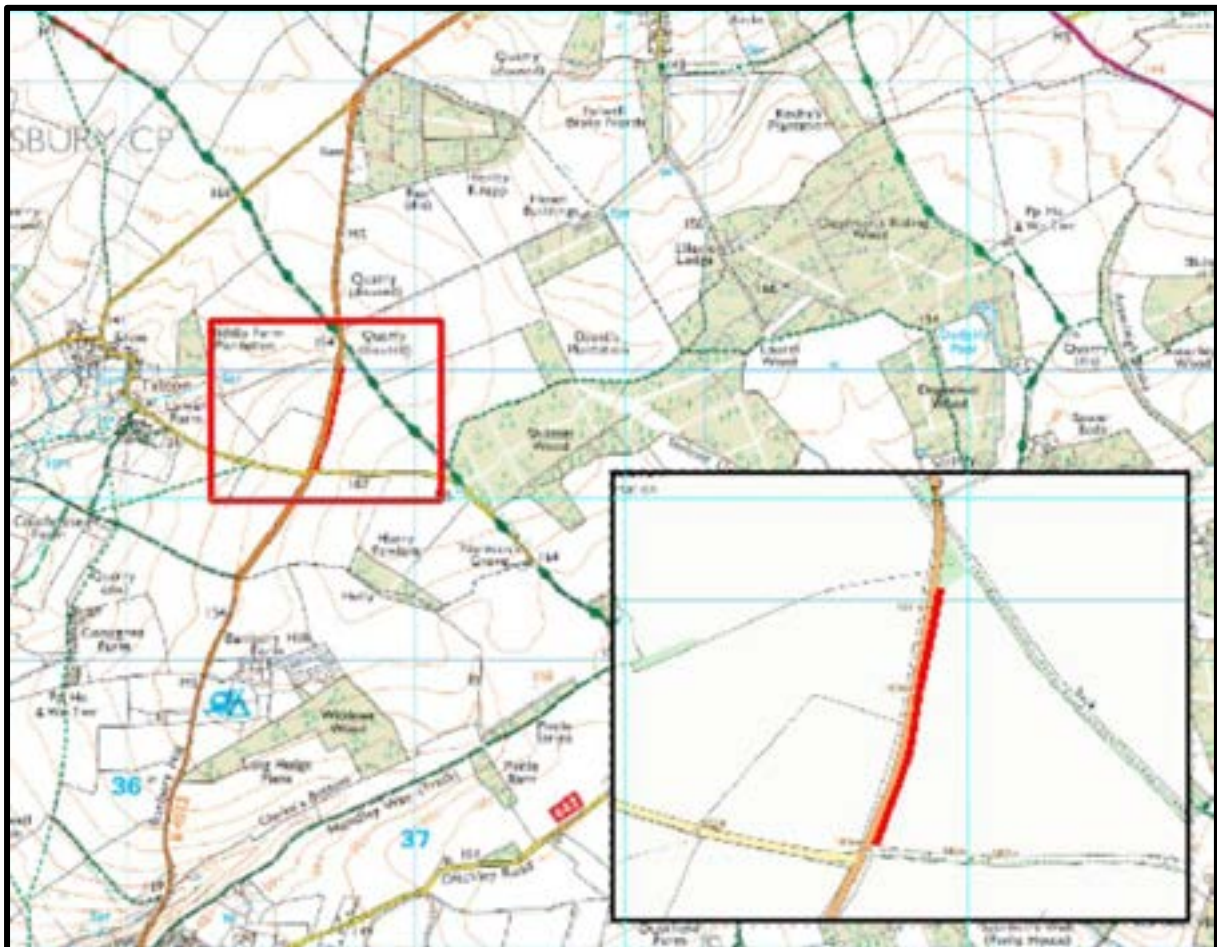
Restoration by removal of scrub.



Overview of verge and looking east in 2017

Verge 15: Spelsbury 2

Verge Name	Spelsbury 2
Grid Reference	SP 367 220 – SP 366 216
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Spelsbury
Date of last survey	September 2017
Approximate Length	300m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A verge along the eastern side of a straight section of the B4022. A range of limestone grassland species, including Meadow Crane's-bill, Greater Knapweed and most notably Meadow Clary *Salvia Herminoides*, albeit in small numbers.

The verge is becoming more rank in places, however retains key interest species.

The northern verge is also of interest, with a similar species diversity, along with Woolly Thistle.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Blenheim and Ditchley Parks Conservation Target Area and approximately 480m from the Lower Farm Meadow Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Restoration work to improve diversity and allow greater re-establishment of Meadow Clary.



View from south and overview in 2017

Verge 16: Shillingford

Verge Name	Shillingford
Grid Reference	SP 586 935 – SP 587 934
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Shillingford
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Neutral Grassland



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Site Description

On the northern side of the road the verge is grassy and banked with a hedgerow at the top. Species present include Greater Knapweed, Field Scabious and Wild Basil. A small patch of Wild Clary remains.

On the southern side of the road the vegetation is similar, but more rank overall. Moving south the verge becomes damper, with species including Marsh Thistle. This side of the road should be considered for inclusion.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Thames Clifton to Shillingford Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, including southern verge.

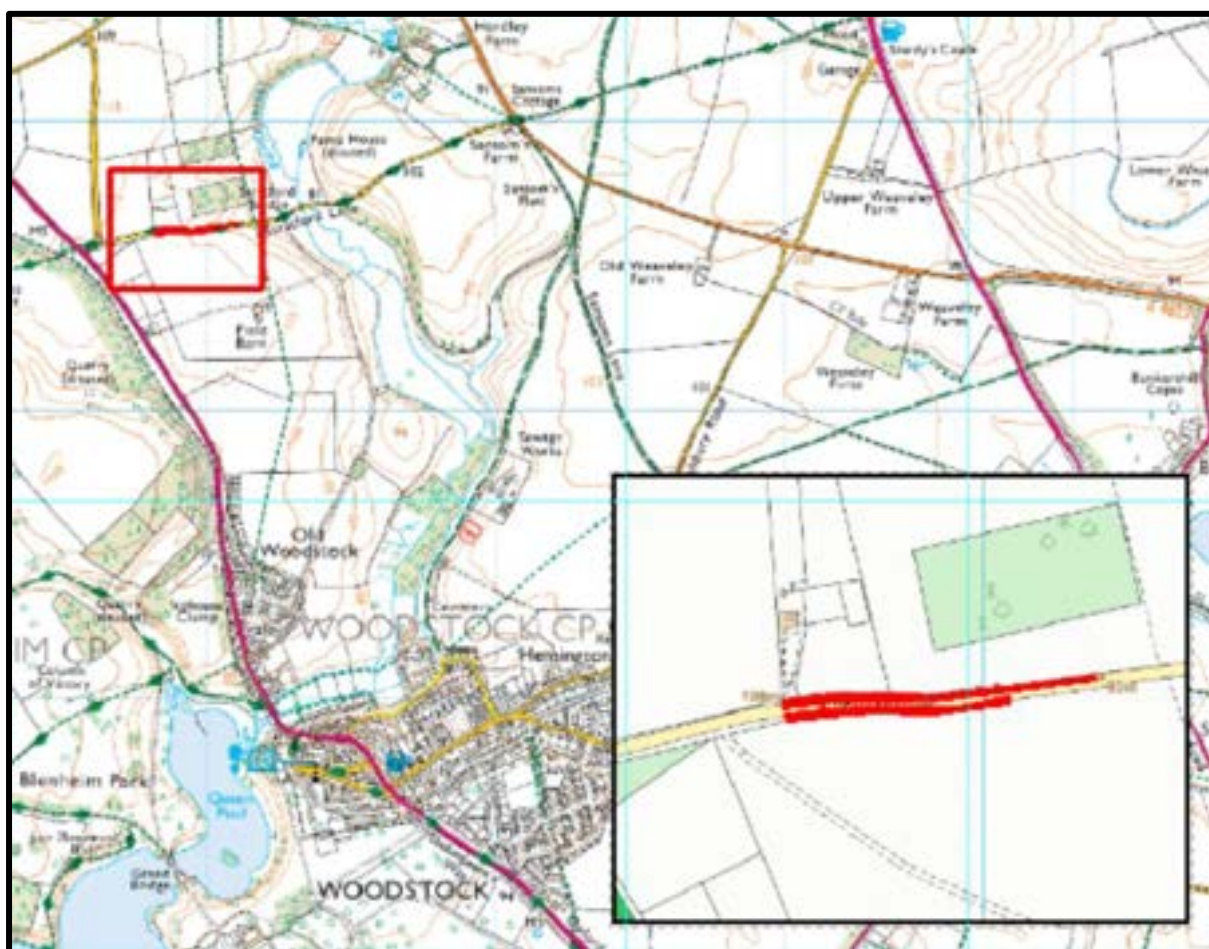
Currently there is a build-up of fegg, which should be removed.



Verge overview in 2022

Verge 17: Stratford Lane

Verge Name	Stratford Lane
Grid Reference	SP 438 187 – SP 440 187
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Wootton and Woodstock
Date of last survey	July 2018
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A straight section of road with interesting verges on both sides. Limestone grassland characteristic species remain present in good numbers, including Greater Knapweed *Centaurea scabiosa*, Common Knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, Salad Burnet *Poterium sanguisorba*, Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis* and Wild Marjoram. Previously recorded species Wild Liquorice *Astragalus glycyphylus* and Sainfoin were not recorded during the latest survey, possibly due to late survey.

Overall, the verges are both in rank condition, with greater interest on the southern side. Some scrub encroachment present.

A footpath is located along the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

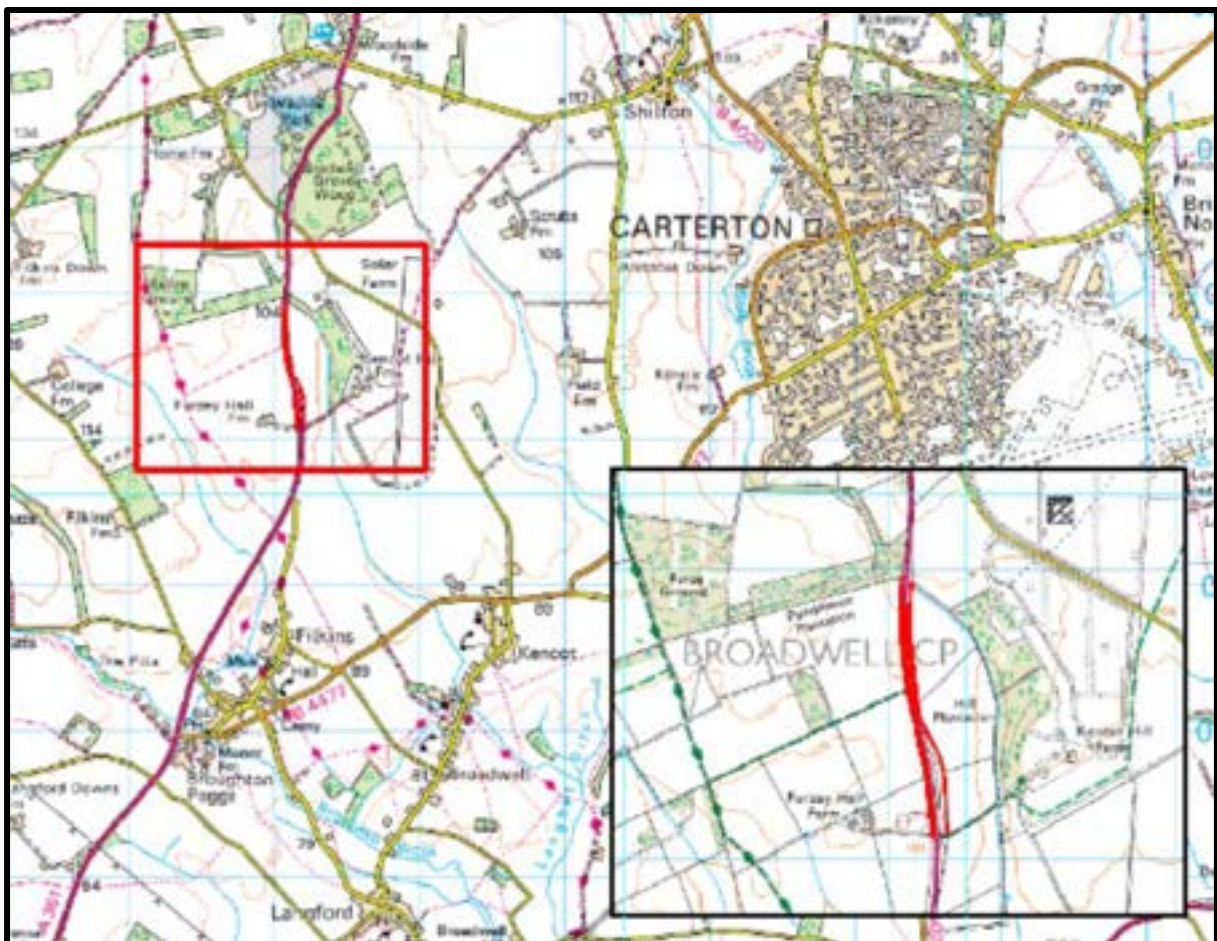
Some scrub control required.



Southern verge looking west and northern verge looking east in 2018

Verge 18: Burford

Verge Name	Burford
Grid Reference	SP 243 061 – SP 241 069
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Filkins and Broadwell
Date of last survey	September 2017
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Wooded section of old road (east) and Bank (west)



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Site Description

Narrow verges on either side of the A361. On the west side there is a bank and on the eastern side there is an overgrown hedgerow with the old road behind. The verge supports a good range of limestone grassland species, including Field Scabious, Agrimony *Agrimony eupatoria* and Restharrow.

The verge on both sides has become more rank in character with overgrown hedgerow and scrub developing. Yellow Ant was observed.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Approximately 250m from the RAF Broadwell Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September, preferably with a high blade where anthills are present.

Some scrub control required and management of the former carriageway if possible.

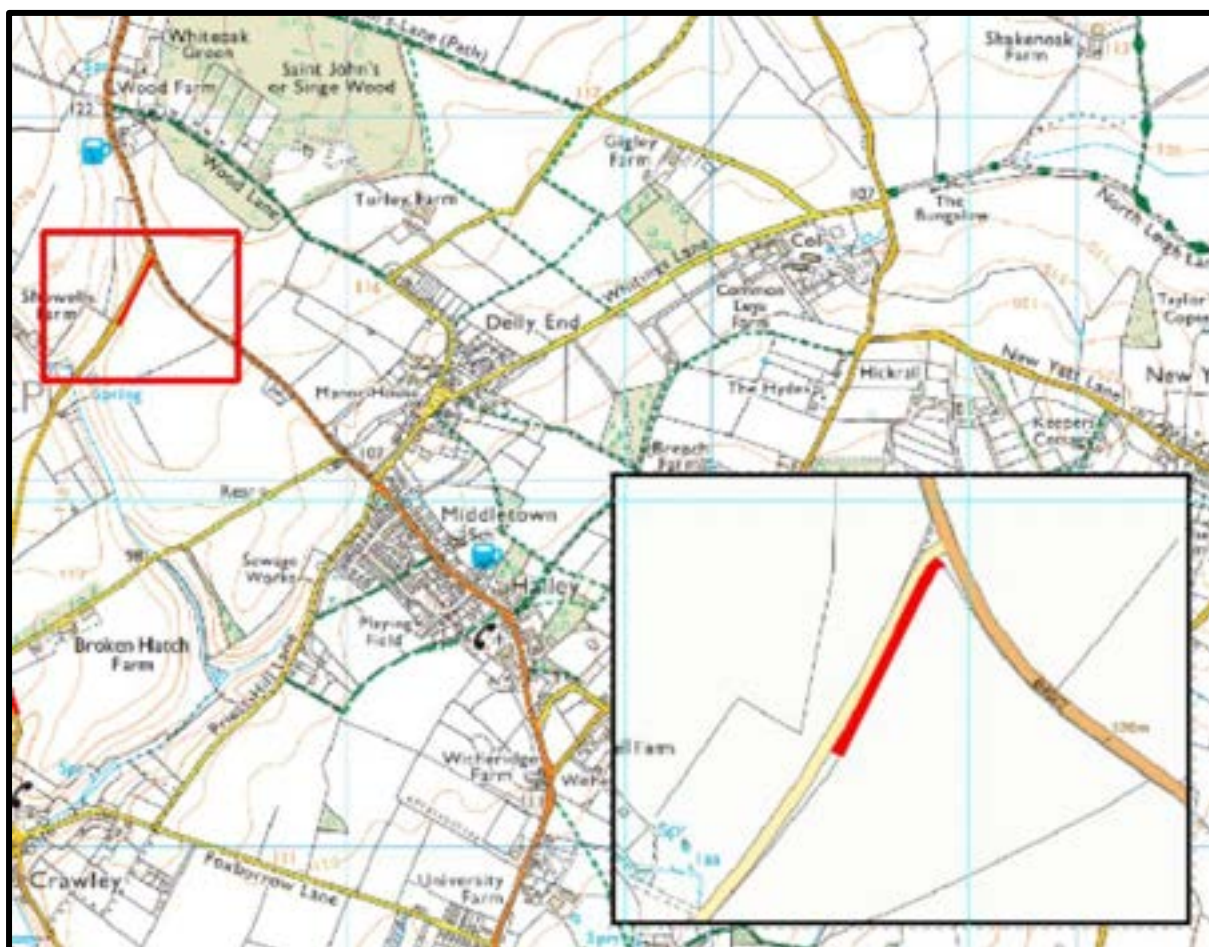
Two marker posts are present.



Western and Eastern verges in 2017

Verge 19: Hailey

Verge Name	Hailey
Grid Reference	SP 334 134 – SP 345 136
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A north-west facing embankment which supports a range of characteristic limestone grassland species.

At the time of the last survey, a number of species were identified, including Yellow Rattle, Salad Burnet, Hoary Plantain, Fairy Flax and Quaking Grass. Scrub was present towards the centre of the verge.

Since the survey, works by Giga-clear have severely damaged the verge, meaning restoration is required. Stone ballast has been left on the verge, which will need to be removed to enable restoration and cutting.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Full restorative works are required to re-establish the verge flora.



Verge overview in 2022

Verge 20: Middleton Stoney 1

Verge Name	Middleton Stoney 1
Grid Reference	SP 537 251
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Middleton Stoney
Date of last survey	May 2020
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A banked verge along the B430, located adjacent to arable fields. No evidence of the original key species Meadow Clary was found during the survey in 2017. The verge was in largely poor and rank condition, with some evidence of dumped vegetation and woodchip.

During the 2020 survey, the verges condition appeared improved, with a large stand of Meadow Clary located at the northern end. This stand appears to be further north than the original survey records suggest.

The old road is more overgrown, with scrub encroachment. This habitat was however clearly of value to nesting birds, with species including Long-tailed Tits nesting at the time of survey.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Ardley Trackways Site of Special Scientific Interest and Ardley Fields Local Geological Site.

The verge is within the Ardley and Upper Heyford Conservation Target Area and approximately 430m from the Ardley Fields Ponds West Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September / October. Some scrub control required.



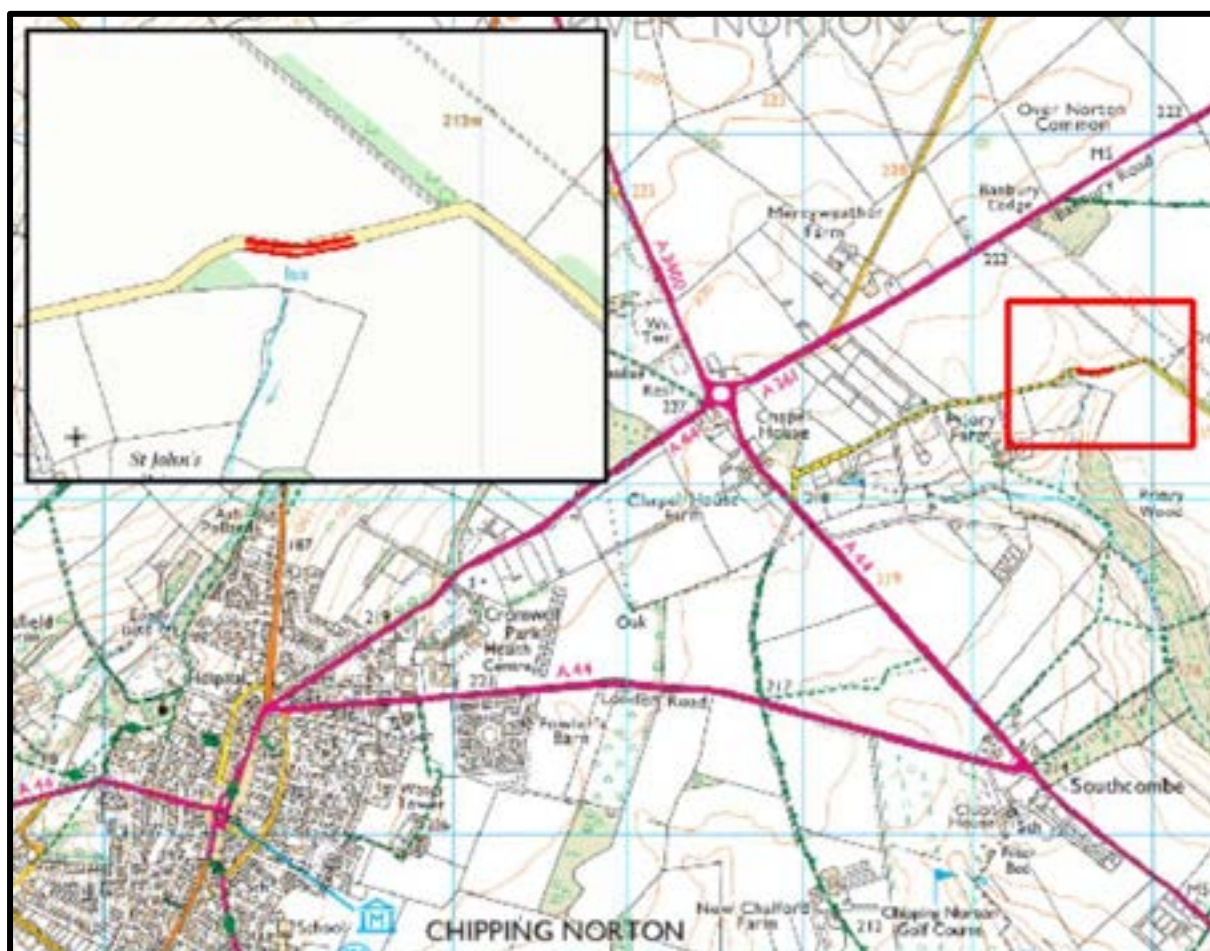
Verge looking south and scrub encroachment in 2017



Meadow Clary – May 2020

Verge 21: Heythrop 2

Verge Name	Heythrop 2
Grid Reference	SP 337 248 – SP 338 248
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Heythrop
Date of last survey	August 2018
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A narrow verge adjacent to a minor road to Heythrop from Chipping Norton. A steep bank is present on the northern side and both sides are adjacent to arable fields.

The verge was becoming rank in character, with some likelihood of fertiliser drift from the adjacent fields. Some evidence of road vehicle damage present on the northern side. Overall species diversity remained good, with species such as Greater Knapweed, Field Scabious and Lady's Bedstraw still present.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

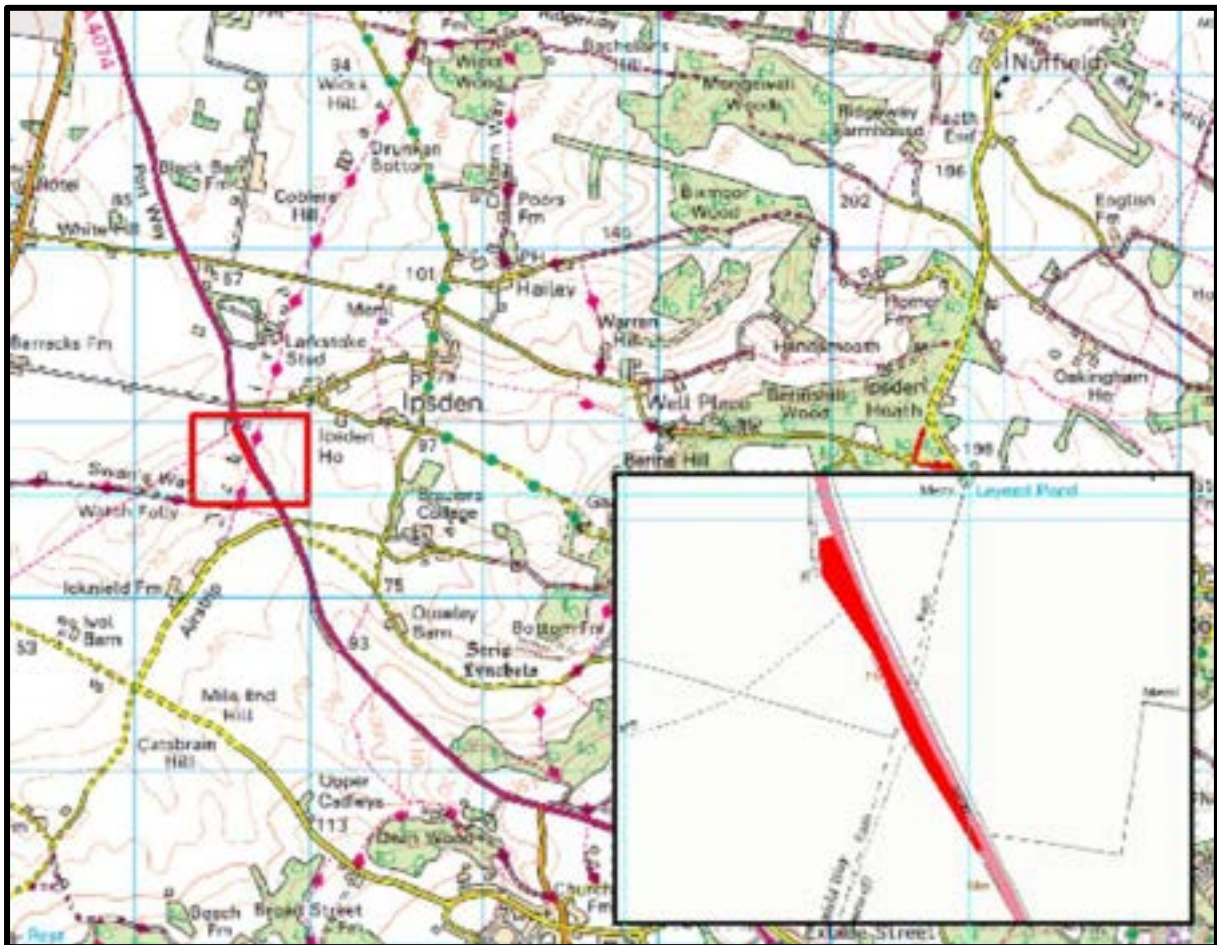
Annual cut and collect/pile in late September.



Overview of verge in 2011

Verge 22: Ipsden

Verge Name	Ipsden
Grid Reference	SP 626 848 – SP 627 846
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Ipsden
Date of last survey	September 2017
Approximate Length	500m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland



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Site Description

A wide verge and embankment along the western side of the A4074. The verge supports a good range of chalk grassland species, including Field Scabious, Greater Knapweed, Bee Orchid *Ophrys apifera* and Marjoram *Origanum vulgare*.

The northern part of the verge maintains key species; however it is becoming more overgrown with Bramble scrub.

Overall, the grassland is in very good condition, with scrub largely confined to an area in the northern end where trees have been planted.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in late September.

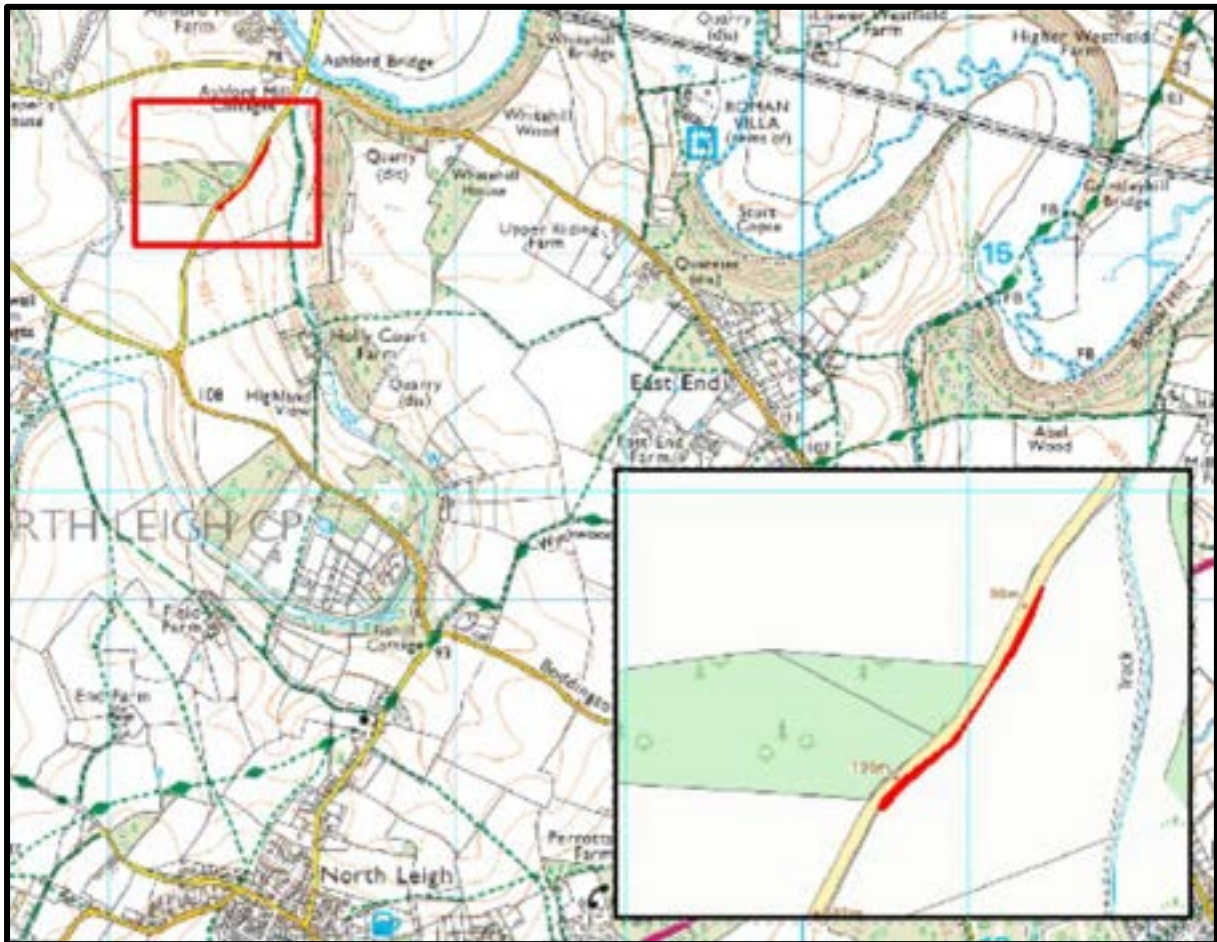
Scrub control to remove Bramble at northern end of verge.



General overview and vegetation including Broomrape in 2017

Verge 23: Ashford Mill

Verge Name	Ashford Mill
Grid Reference	SP 384 152
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	North Leigh
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A grassy verge on a narrow lane along a minor road. The verge has shaded sections on a wider area towards the top of the hill. Overall, the verge has a good range of species, with frequent Red Bartsia, Hairy St John's Wort, Common Knapweed, Agrimony and Wild Marjoram. The wide section had frequent Cowslip.

Overall, the verge is in moderate condition, although becoming increasingly shaded in places due to the copse on the opposite side. The wide section was found to comprise a lot of fegg, with patches of Traveller's Joy developing and threatening to swamp the grassland species.

A bridleway is present at the northern end of the verge.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area and approximately 130m from the Holly Court Bank SSSI.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

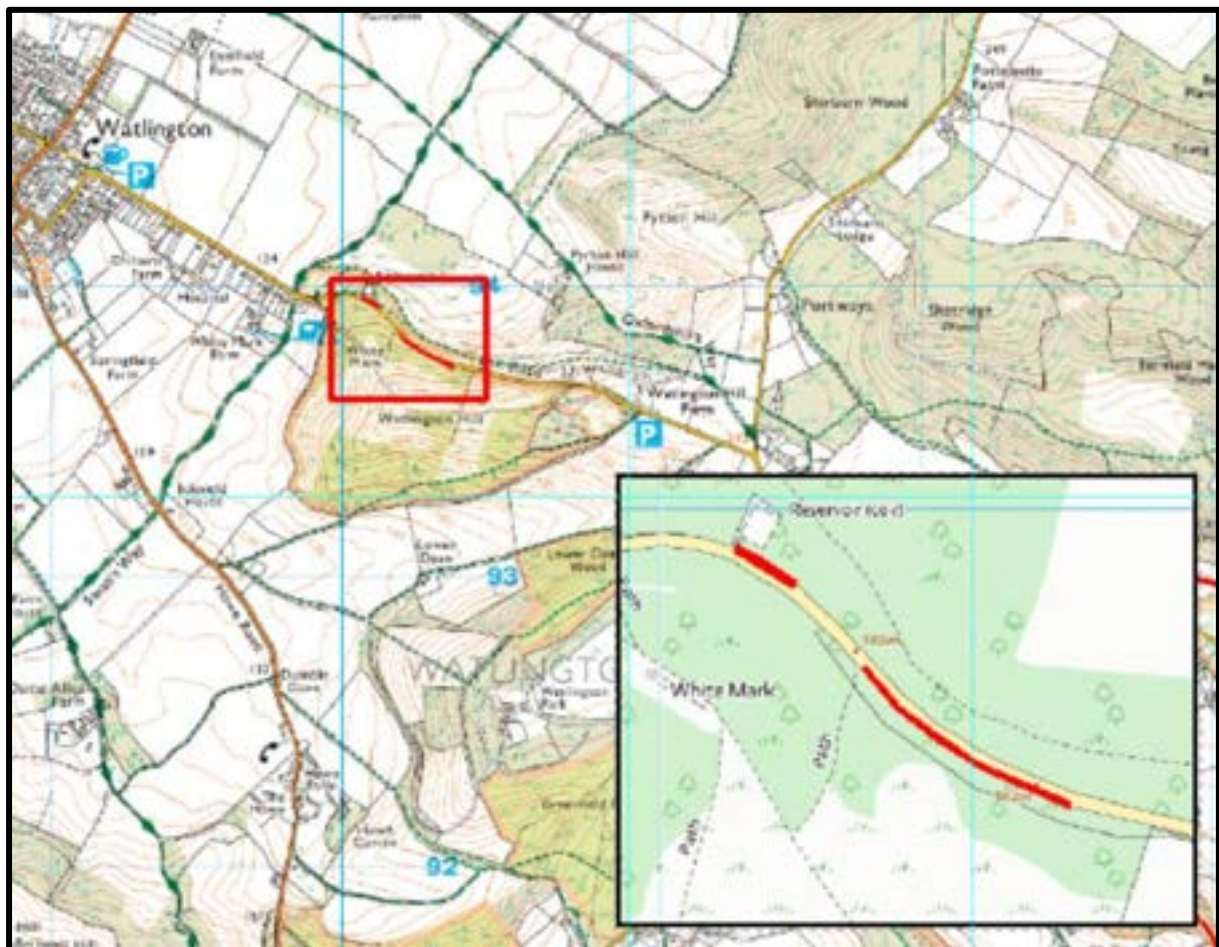
Control of scrub development and cutting back trees to reduce shading if possible.



Verge from south and north in 2016

Verge 24: Watlington

Verge Name	Watlington
Grid Reference	SP 700 940 – SP 705 938
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Watlington
Date of last survey	August 2018
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland



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Site Description

A steeply banked verge along a minor C road, with a wide flat top that adjoins the Watlington Hill National Trust Nature Reserve. The boundary between the verge and reserve is poorly defined.

The verge comprises a very diverse range of characteristic chalk grassland species, including Field Scabious, Greater Knapweed and Marjoram. Dark Mullein *Verbascum nigra* was recorded, however fewer plants were found compared to the original survey.

The south-east verge is largely in good condition, with numerous anthills scattered throughout the flat top of the bank. The north-western section is shaded in places, with the patchy Dark Mullein.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Chilterns Escarpment North Conservation Target Area, within the Watlington and Pyrton Hills Site of Special Scientific Interest and adjacent to the Watlington Hay Meadow Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September / October.

The top of the south-eastern verge needs further management, from grazing or hand management with brush-cutters, avoiding damage to anthills.

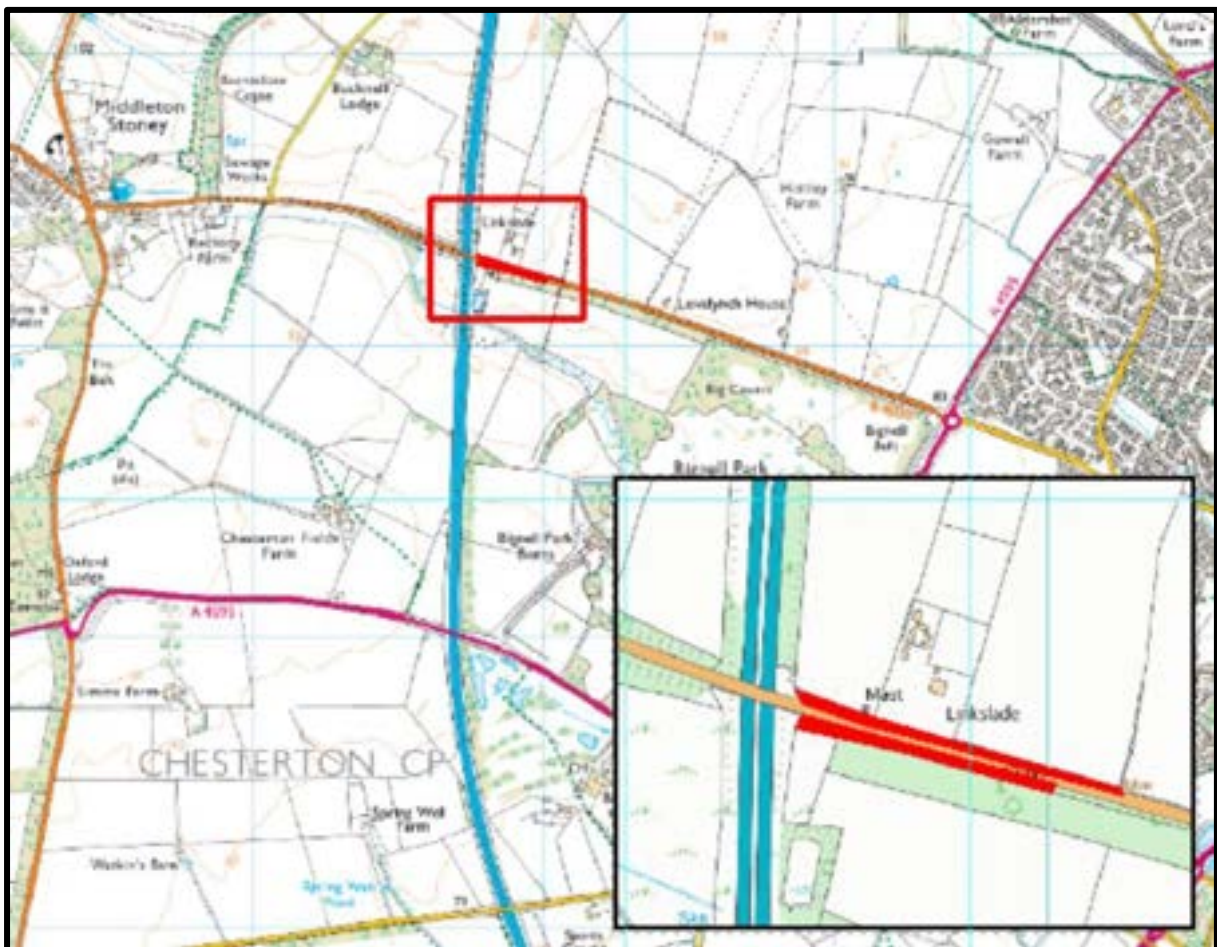
Two marker posts at either end of the northern side.



Verge overview in 2018

Verge 25: Middleton Stoney 2

Verge Name	Middleton Stoney 2
Grid Reference	SP 549 232
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Middleton Stoney
Date of last survey	August and September 2017
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Bank and adjoining woodland



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Site Description

A narrow flat verge with a good diversity of species, including Ploughman's Spikenard and Blue Fleabane. Overall, the verge is in good condition, however, some chippings from tree works had been left on the verge at the time of survey, suppressing key plant species and causing localised nutrient enrichment. The verge is otherwise in good condition.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Removal of any wood chippings and scrub removal as required.

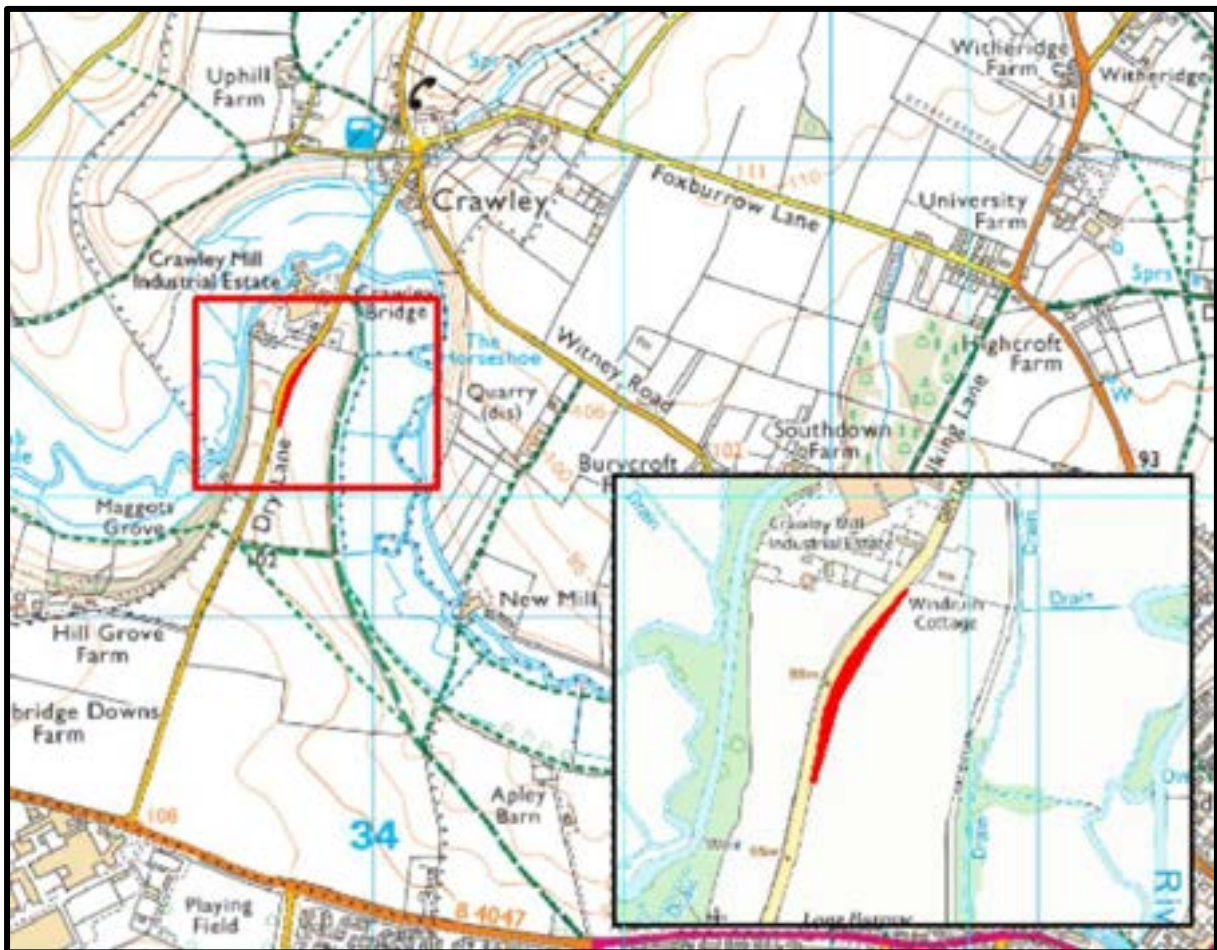
Two marker posts present.



Southern and northern verges in 2017

Verge 26: Dry Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Dry Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SU 338 115
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	170m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch



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Site Description

A flat, wide verge along Dry Lane with grassy, somewhat rank vegetation. Taller forbs are present, with abundant Common Knapweed and frequent Woolly Thistle and Field Scabious. Seed heads and leaves of Cowslip were also found.

The ditch was dry at the time of the survey with no wetland species present, however Marsh Thistle was found on the verge. A drainage channel from the road crosses the verge, suggesting that run-off may be affecting the grassland.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 50m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and approximately 160m from the Maggots Grove Wood Local Wildlife Site, 100m from the Minster Lovell Meadows Local Wildlife Site and 145m from the Crawley Marsh Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

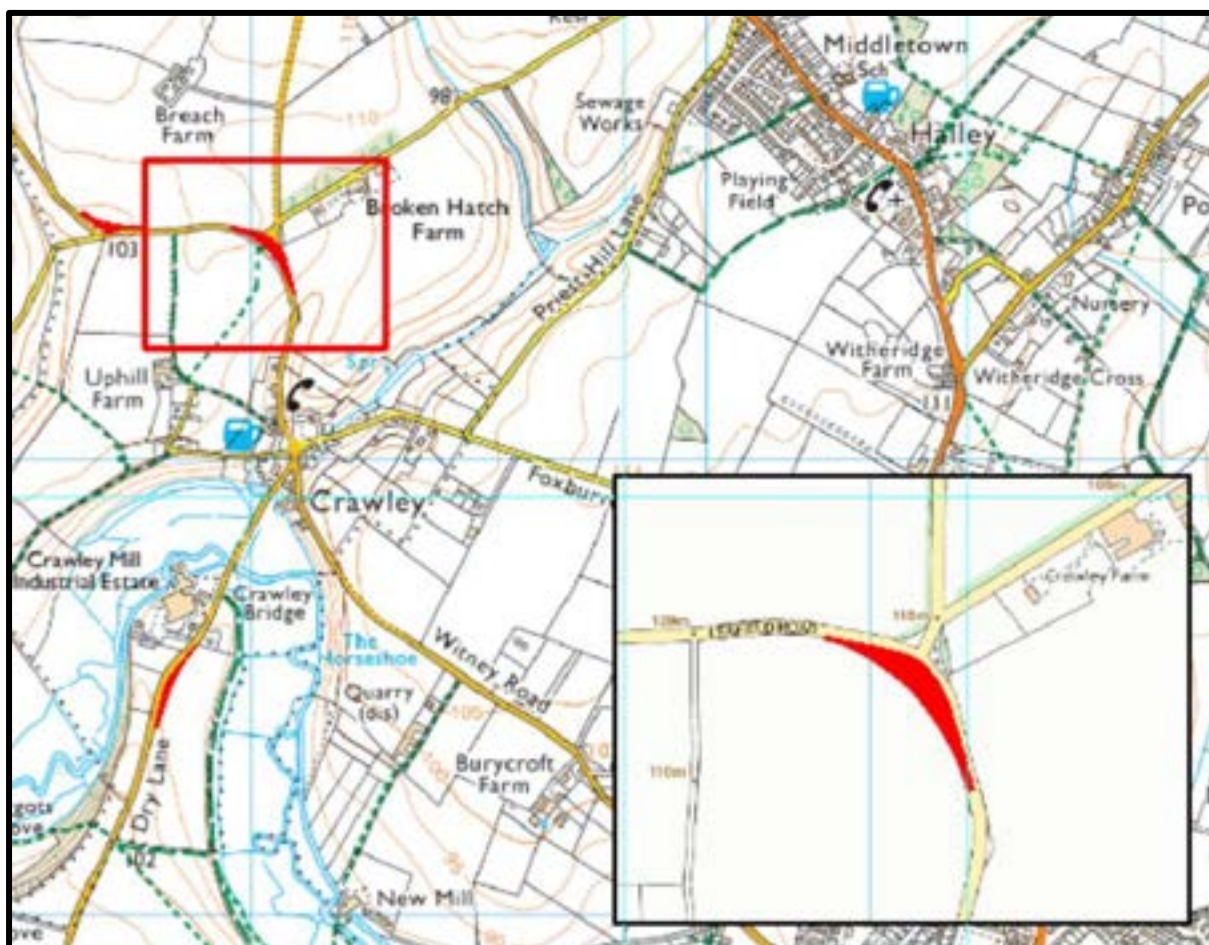
Consideration could be given to deepening the channel to ensure run-off reaches the ditch rather than over-spilling onto the verge.



Overview of verge in 2021

Verge 27: Leaffield Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Leaffield Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SP 340 125
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Bare ground



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Site Description

Verges are located around the junction to north of Crawley. The widest and most species-rich verge is to the west of the junction, with species including Meadow Clary, Greater Knapweed and Meadow Crane's-bill. The Meadow Clary is within areas of thinner soil, whereas the rest of the verge is more grassy, with abundant False Oat-grass and a good distribution of forbs. Run-off from the road and uneven ground is likely causing nutrient enrichment. A footpath crosses the western verge.

On the northern side of the junction the vegetation is more patchy, with occasional Field Scabious and locally frequent Greater Knapweed and Common Knapweed. Common Restharrow and Common Toadflax were also present occasionally. Weedy species such as Cock's-foot and Dandelion are also present sporadically and the edge has frequent Cow Parsley and Docks. To the east of the junction the verge has occasional Lady's Bedstraw and Agrimony, with frequent Field Scabious and some Greater Knapweed. Localised Bramble scrub is present where shading is present.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verges are approximately 35m from the Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area and the Manor Farm Meadow Local Wildlife Site is approximately 400m to the south-west.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub treatment as required in Summer.



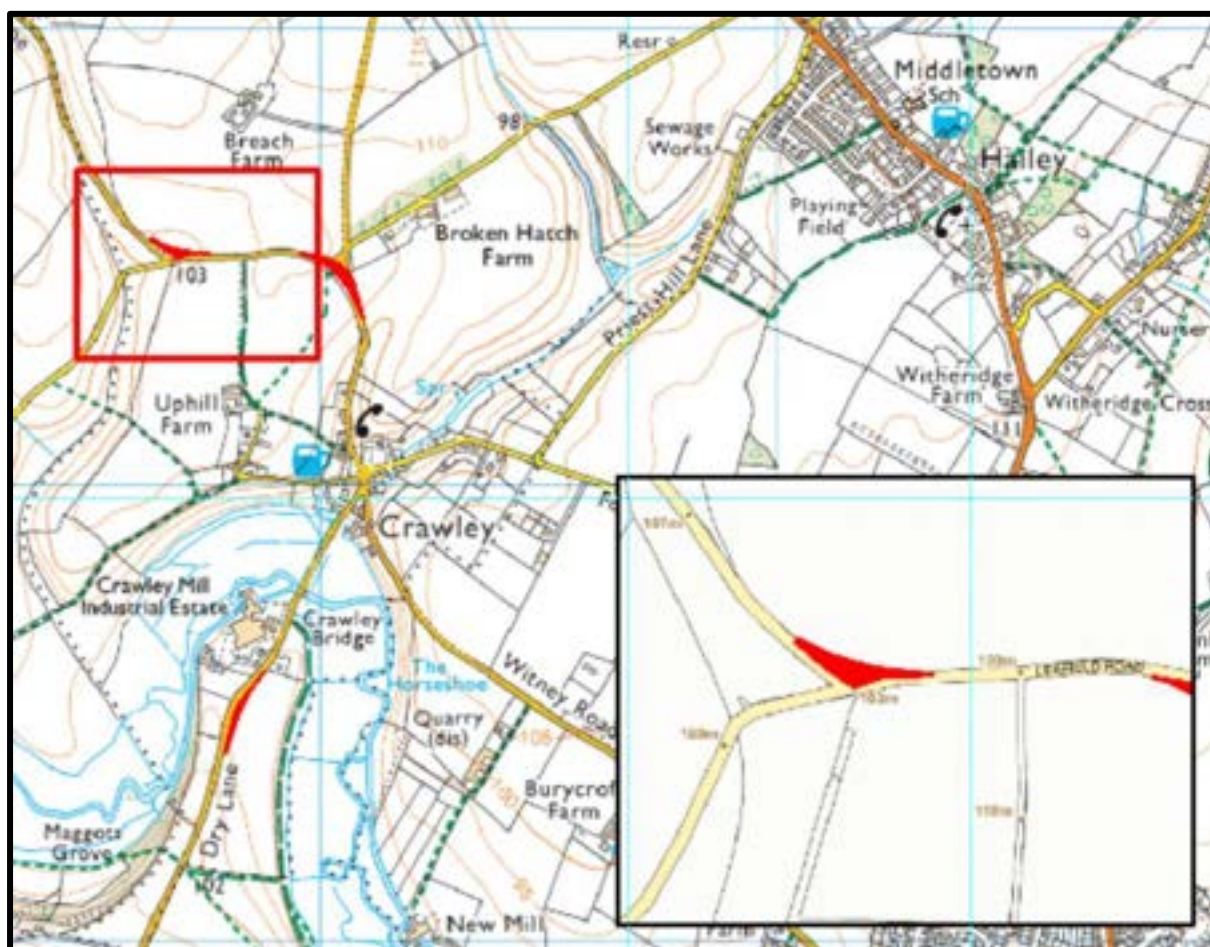
Northern and western verges in 2016



Eastern verge in 2016

Verge 28: Ridings Lane, Crawley

Verge Name	Ridings Lane, Crawley
Grid Reference	SP 336 125
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Crawley
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	150m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

A wide section of verge with a good diversity of lime-loving species, including Common Restharrow, Burnet Saxifrage and Fairy Flax. The narrower sections are also reasonably species-rich.

Generally, the verge is in good condition, with occasional Blackthorn scrub. Some fertiliser drift onto the verge from the adjacent field appears to be being reduced by the scrub, hedgerow and wall, where Common Nettle and Hogweed become more apparent.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located between the Upper Windrush and Wychwood and Lower Evenlode (500m to each) Conservation Target Areas.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

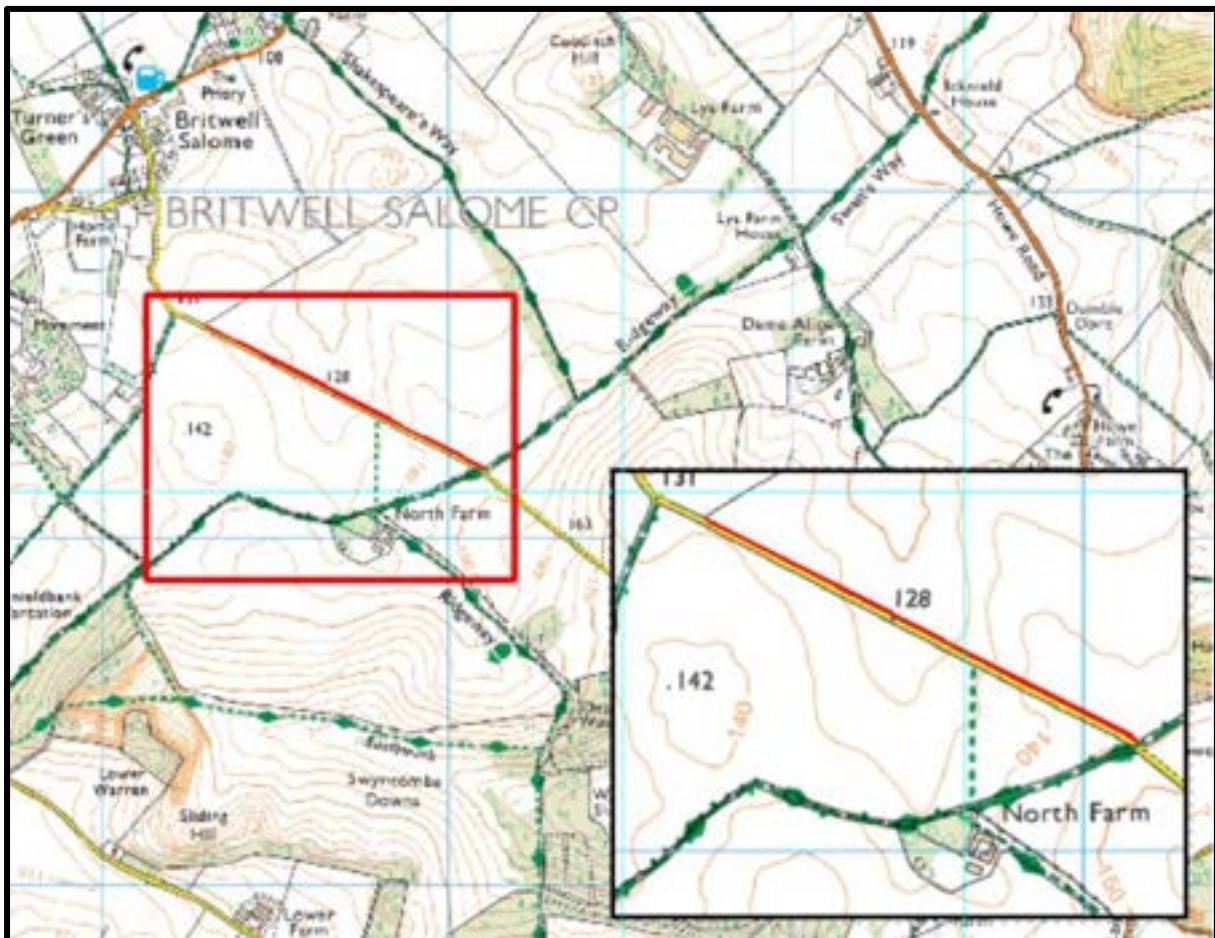
Scrub control required.



Verge overview in 2016

Verge 29: Britwell Hill

Verge Name	Britwell Hill
Grid Reference	SP 676 924
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Britwell Salome
Date of last survey	August 2017
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Ditch



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Site Description

A long straight road with verges on either side, with colonies of Knapweed and Greater Broomrape. Other species present on the northern verge include Greater Knapweed, Burnet Saxifrage, Common Restharrow, Wild Basil and Wild Marjoram. While the southern verge lacks these species, it is nonetheless diverse.

The northern verge is in good condition at the eastern end, becoming more rank further west. The southern verge is more rank overall, with a patch of Dogwood present.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 230m from the Chilterns Escarpment North Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

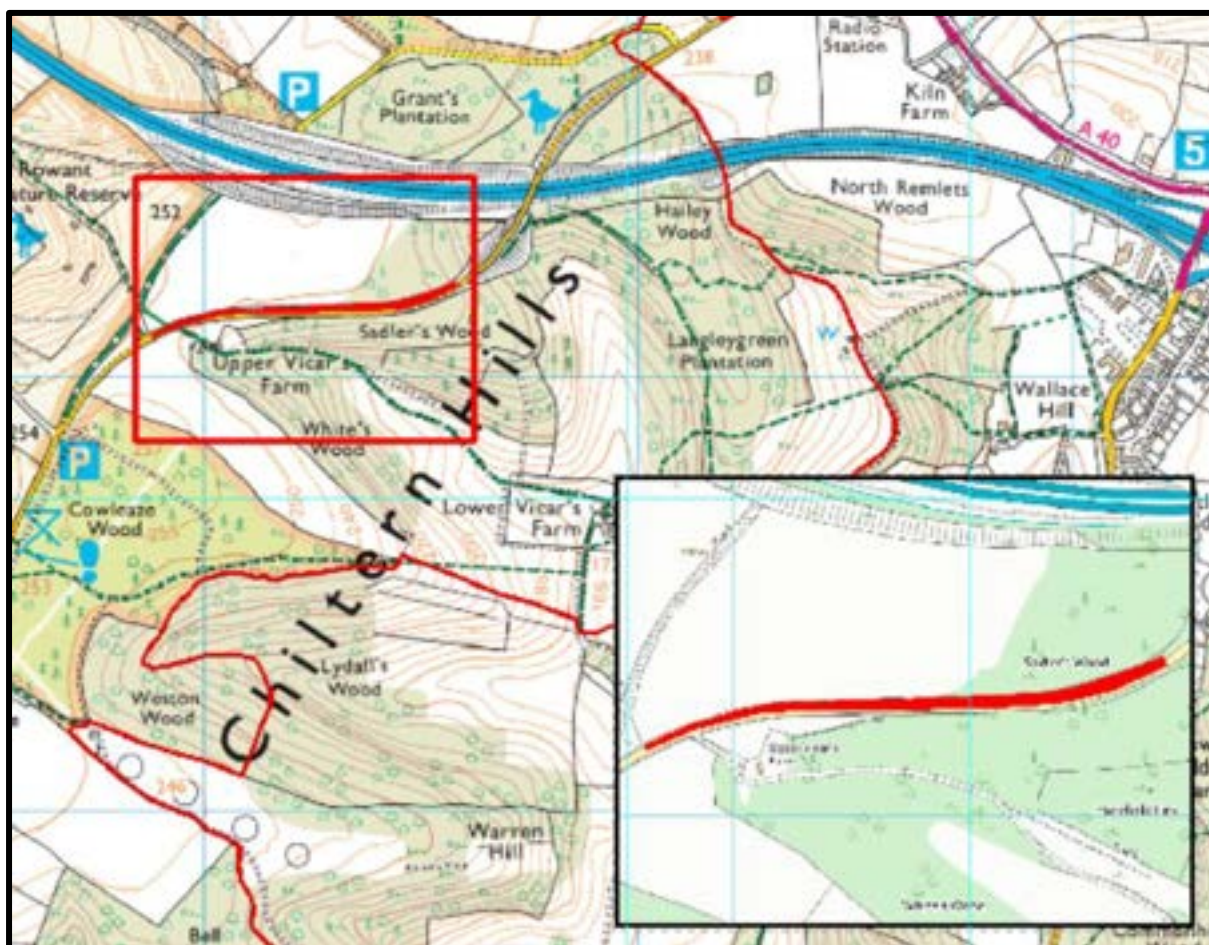
Control of Dogwood by cutting and weed treatment if necessary.



Verge from east and Broomrape in 2017

Verge 30: Cowleaze Wood

Verge Name	Cowleaze Wood
Grid Reference	SU 732 960
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Aston Rowant
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	500m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A south facing verge adjacent to a hedgerow. A species of interest, the Ploughman's-spikenard was found at the time of survey, however a survey earlier in the year may be beneficial. The grassland is characterised by abundant Wild Carrot and frequent Wild Basil, Oxeye Daisy, Common Knapweed and Perforate St John's-wort. Other key species such as Musk Mallow and Field Scabious occur occasionally.

Overall, the verge is in moderate condition, with signs of minor scrub encroachment. A footpath is located at the western end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is adjacent to the Chilterns Dipslope and Plateau Conservation Target Area and approximately 60m from the Aston Rowant National Nature Reserve.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September to hedgerow.

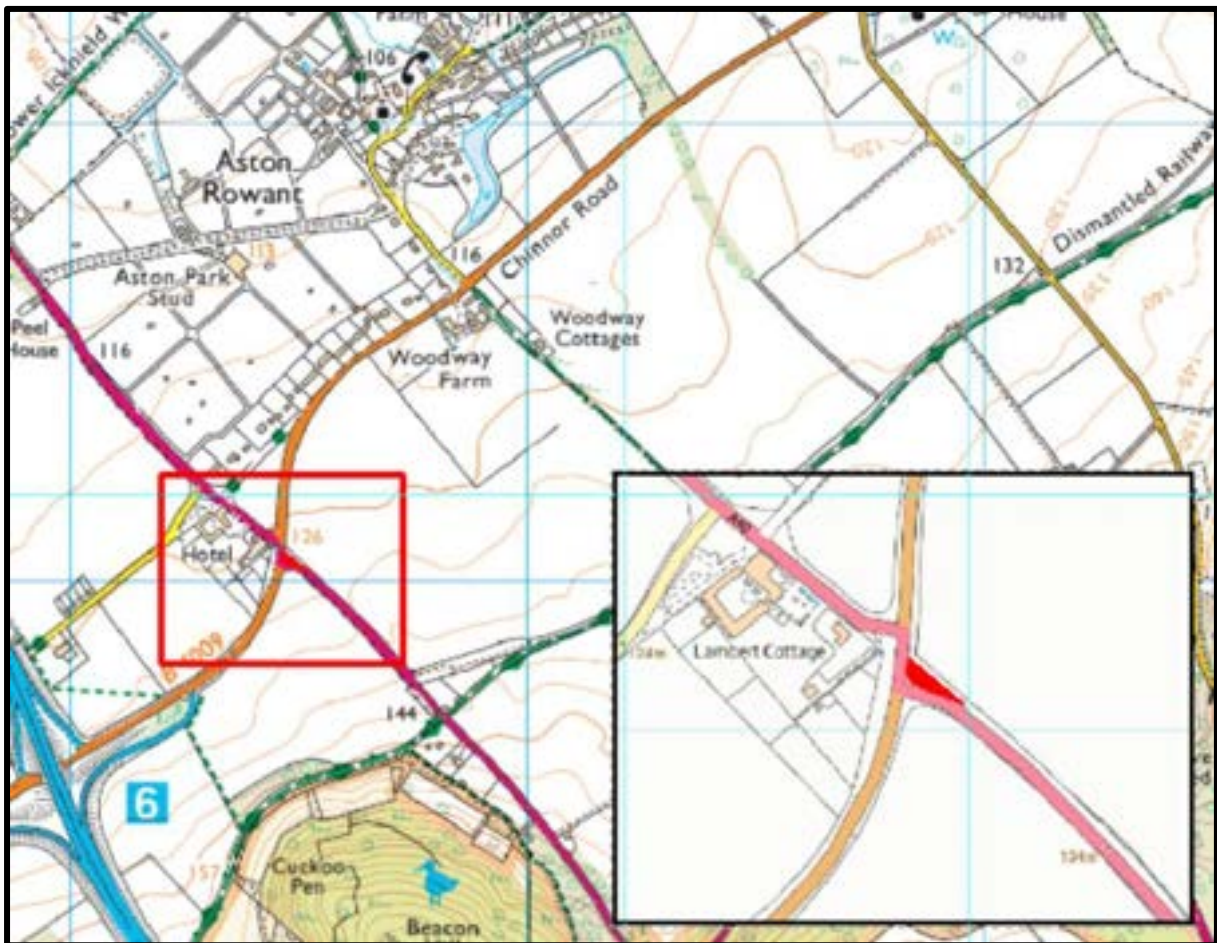
Scrub control may be required.



Overview of verge and Ploughman's-spikenard in 2016

Verge 31: Aston Rowant

Verge Name	Aston Rowant
Grid Reference	SP 724 980
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Aston Rowant
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Planted trees and scrub



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Site Description

Verges along both sides of the road, where the B4009 meets the A40. Species including Wild Basil and Wild Carrot present. The north-eastern side drops sharply through a hedgerow into a field.

Overall, the north-eastern verge is in good condition, becoming more rank up the hill. The south-western verge is more rank throughout.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is approximately 410m from the Aston Rowant SSSI.

Management Requirements

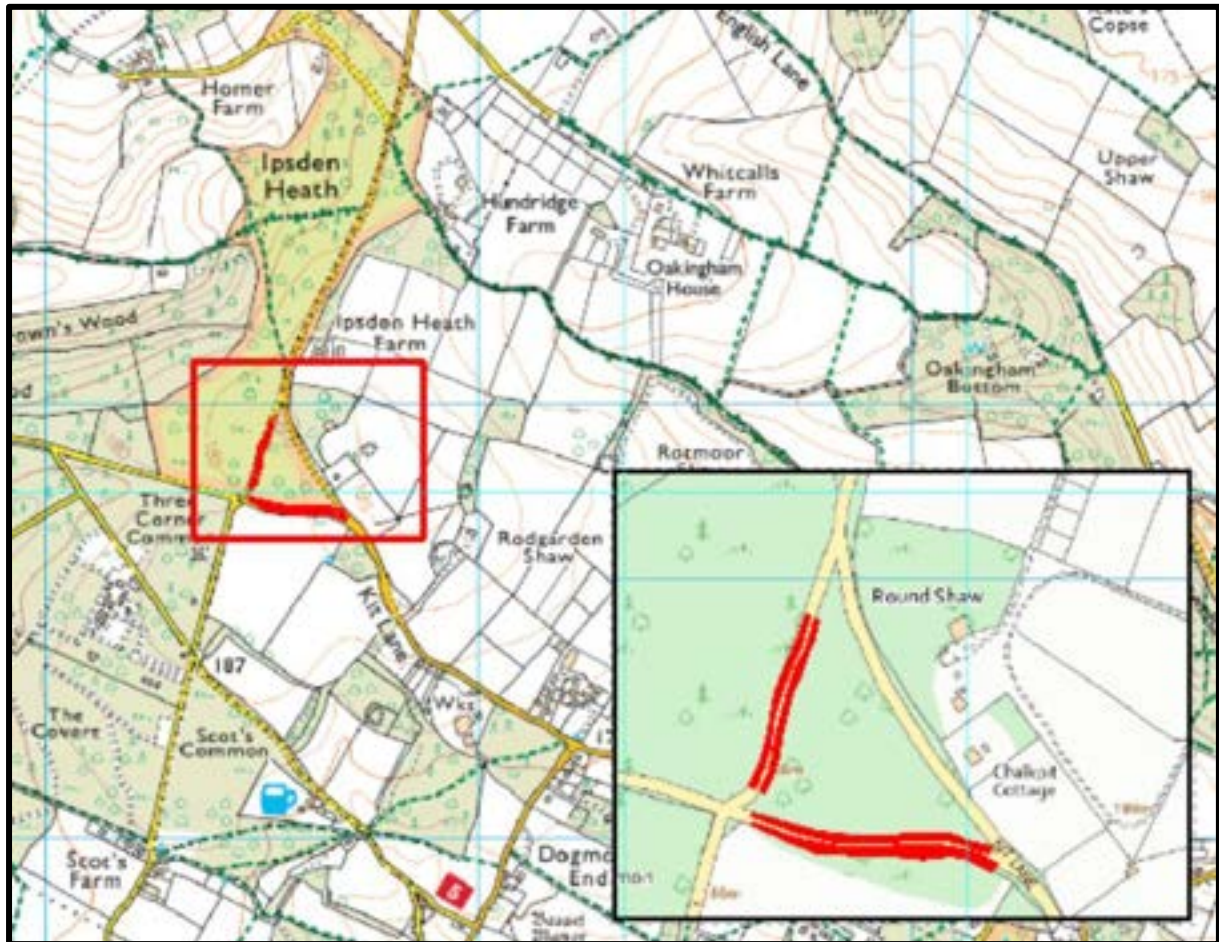
Annual cut and collect/pile in September.



Looking SE toward A40 in 2016

Verge 32: Ipsden Heath

Verge Name	Ipsden Heath
Grid Reference	SP 301 104
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Minster Lovell
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland



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Site Description

Two woodland lanes with verges on both sides. Sections to the east and west are relatively more shaded, while the northern and southern sides are more rank and overgrown. Three of the verges have populations of Violet Helleborine.

Overall, the verges are in moderate condition, however they are becoming increasingly rank and overshadowed in places.

A footpath is located at the eastern end.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Ipsden Heath Local Wildlife Site and 130m south of the Chilterns Escarpment Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile required in September.

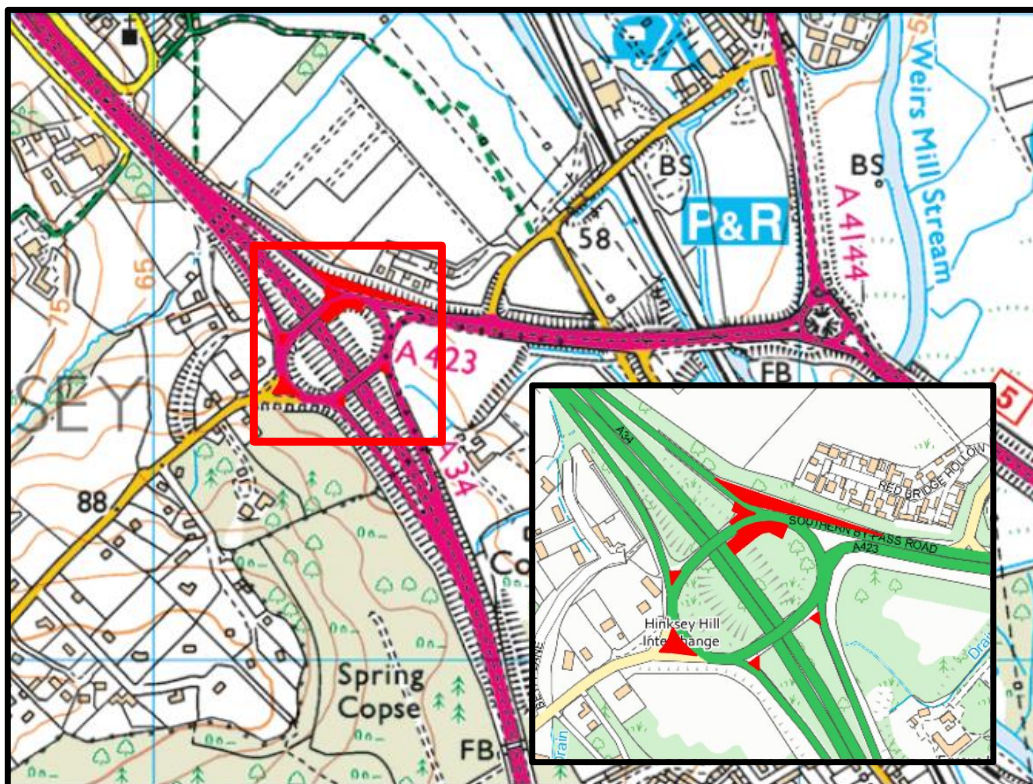
Tree work required to slightly increase light in the most shaded areas, possible cutting of Bramble.



Violet Helleborine and southern verge looking west in 2016

Verge 33: Hinksey Hill

Verge Name	Hinksey Hill
Grid Reference	SP 512 034
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse
Parish	South Hinksey
Date of last survey	June 2019
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjoining woodland



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Site Description

A total of seven species rich verge sections surrounding the Hinksey Hill interchange bordered by woodland. Pyramidal and Common Spotted Orchids have been recorded.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is within the Oxfordshire Heights West Conservation Target Area

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

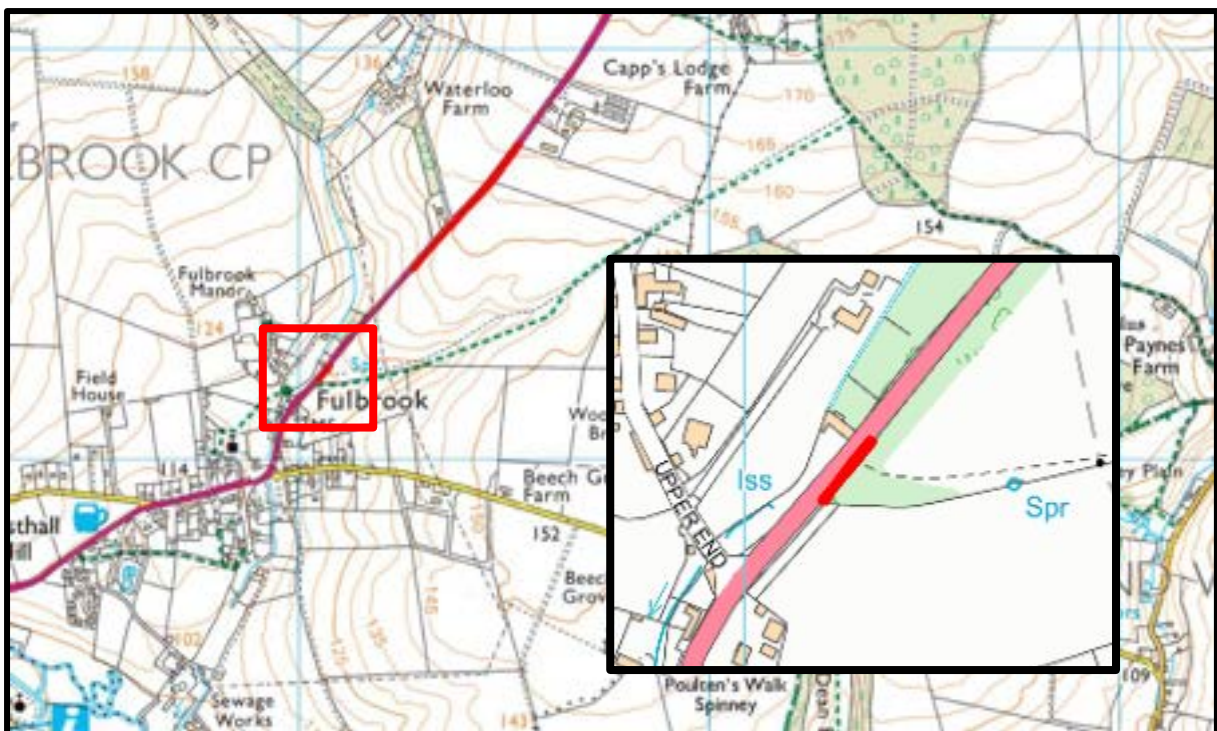
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge sections in 2017

Verge 34: Fullbrook (1)

Verge Name	Fullbrook 1
Grid Reference	SP 263 135
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Fullbrook
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	400m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Hedgerow



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Site Description

A flat, fairly wide verge alongside an A road and adjacent to arable land. The grassland is generally rather rank with areas of Cock's-foot and Hogweed, however better areas have abundant Yellow-rattle and frequent Common Knapweed, Field Scabious and Greater Knapweed. Other species seen less frequently include Lady's Bedstraw, Musk Mallow, Hairy St John's-wort and Wild Marjoram. Viper's Bugloss is rare. Sainfoin was frequent along the verge, but this appeared very large and upright and is probably a cultivar.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located 100m east of Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

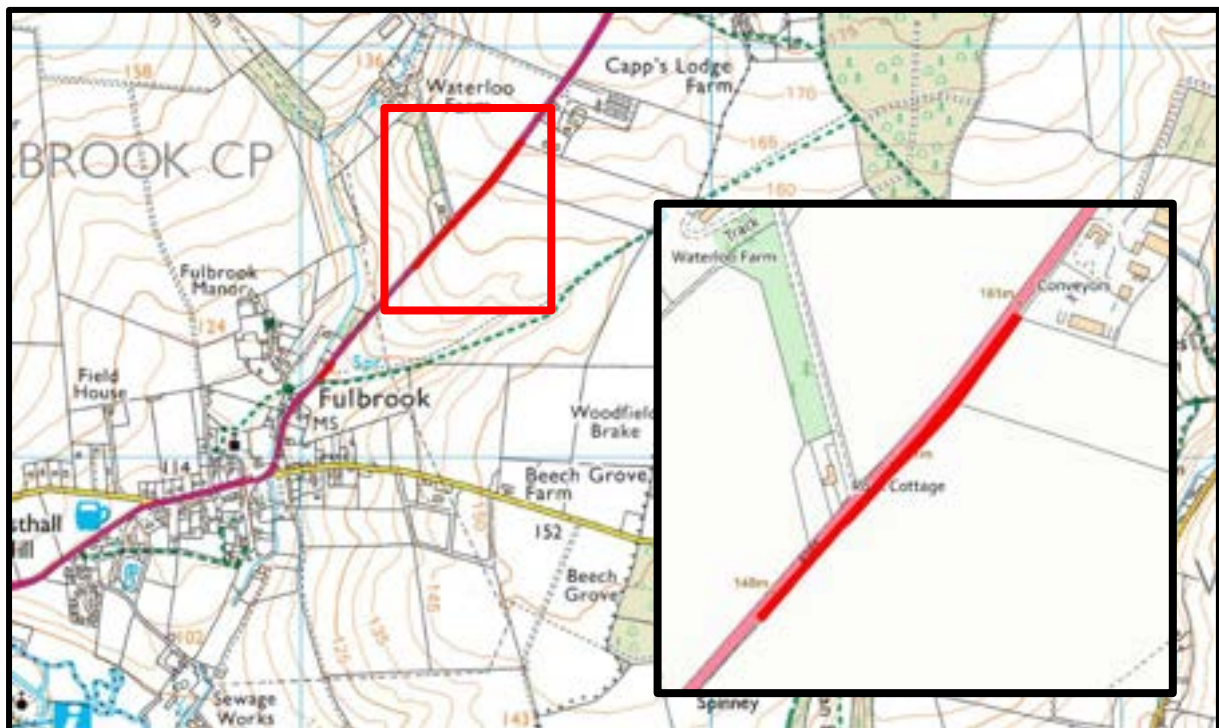
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 35: Fullbrook (2)

Verge Name	Fullbrook 2
Grid Reference	SP 264 136
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Fullbrook
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland



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Site Description

A flat, fairly wide verge alongside an A road and adjacent to arable land. The grassland is generally rather rank with areas of Cock's-foot and Hogweed, however better areas have abundant Yellow-rattle and frequent Common Knapweed, Field Scabious and Greater Knapweed. Other species seen less frequently include Lady's Bedstraw, Musk Mallow, Hairy St John's-wort and Wild Marjoram. Viper's Bugloss is rare. Sainfoin was frequent along the verge, but this appeared very large and upright and is probably a cultivar.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located 100m east of Upper Windrush Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

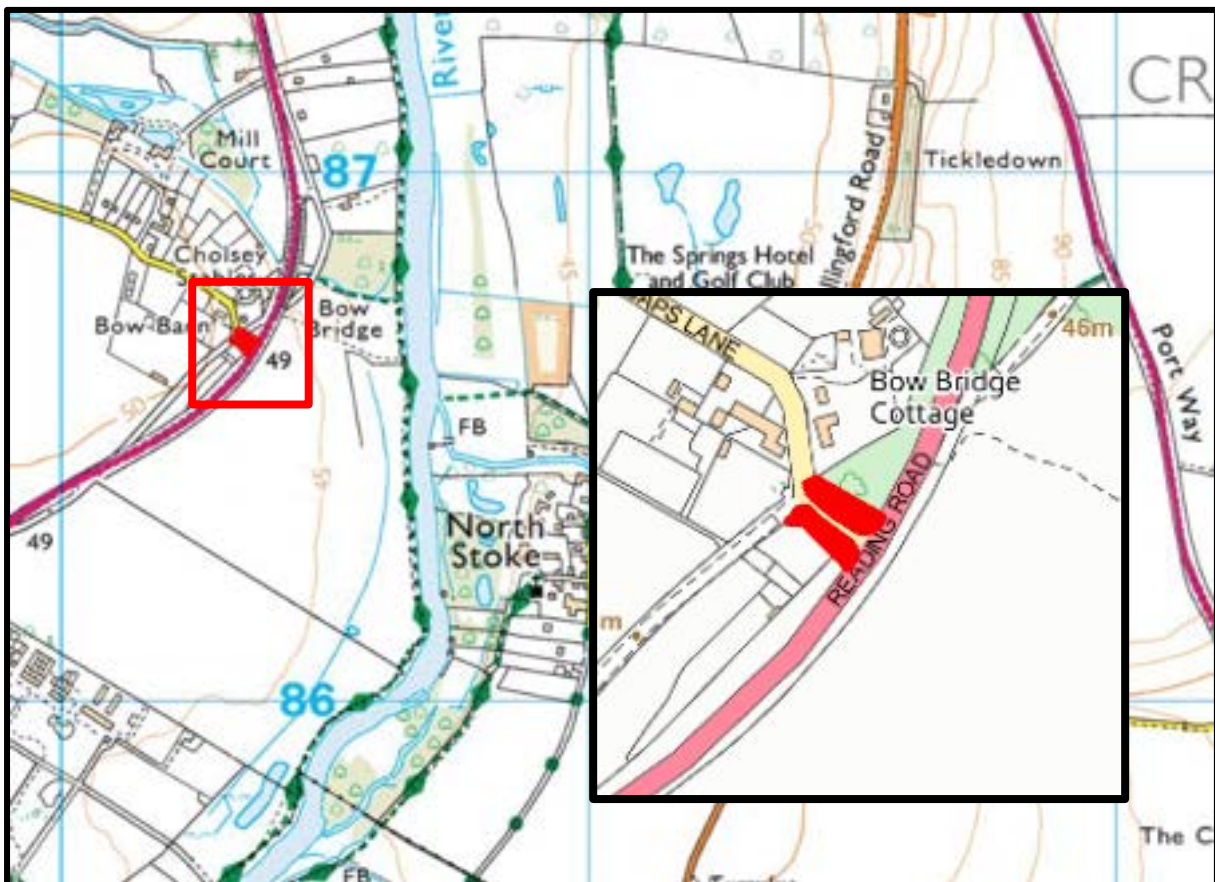
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 36: Caps Lane, Cholsey

Verge Name	Caps Lane, Cholsey
Grid Reference	SU 603 866
Local Authority	South Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Cholsey
Date of last survey	July 2017
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Chalk Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub



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Site Description

A flat verge on road junction, which extends into a triangular shaped patch of scrub on the northeast side, along the A road to the south the botanical interest diminishes. Frequent species recorded include Agrimony, Common Centaury, Ploughman's-spikenard and Wild Marjoram with occasional Blue Fleabane and Wild carrot. Wild basil and Large Garden Thymme were also recorded with rare abundance.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within the Thames Wallingford to Goring Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

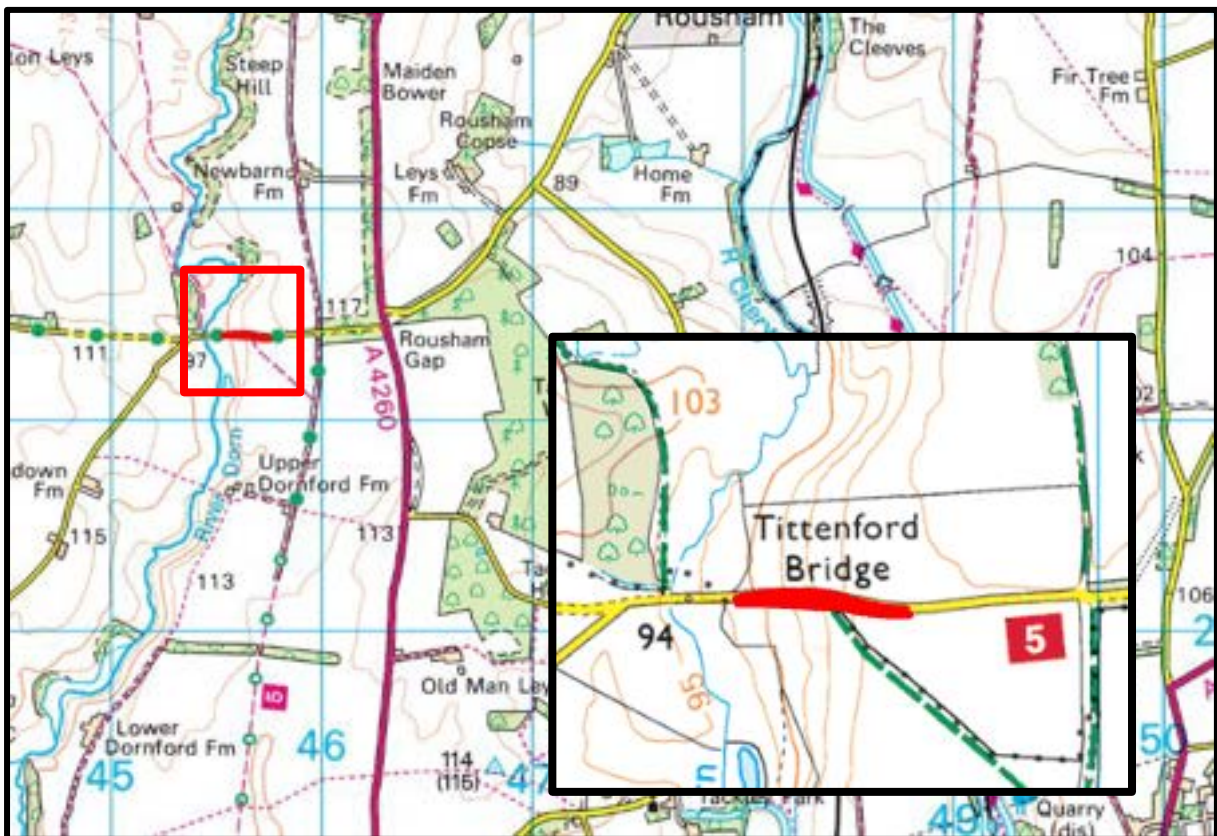
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



North (left) and South (right) sides of verge in 2017

Verge 37: Tittenford Bridge

Verge Name	Tittenford Bridge
Grid Reference	SP 456 224
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Steeple Barton and Wootton
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow and woodland



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Site Description

A short section of minor lane off A4260 at Glympton, with small bank to north side and mainly flat verge to south, which is raised above road level. Nearby to west is a stream valley and woodland.

The southern verge has abundant agrimony and Common Knapweed, with frequent Common Restharrow, Meadow Cranesbill and Hairy Sedge with occasional Woolly Thistle and Cowslip. The north banked verge has a different character with finer vegetation including frequent Common Rock-rose and lady's Bedstraw.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located on the edge of Glyme and Dorn Conservation Target Area. Priory Wood LWS is located 200m south of the verge.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

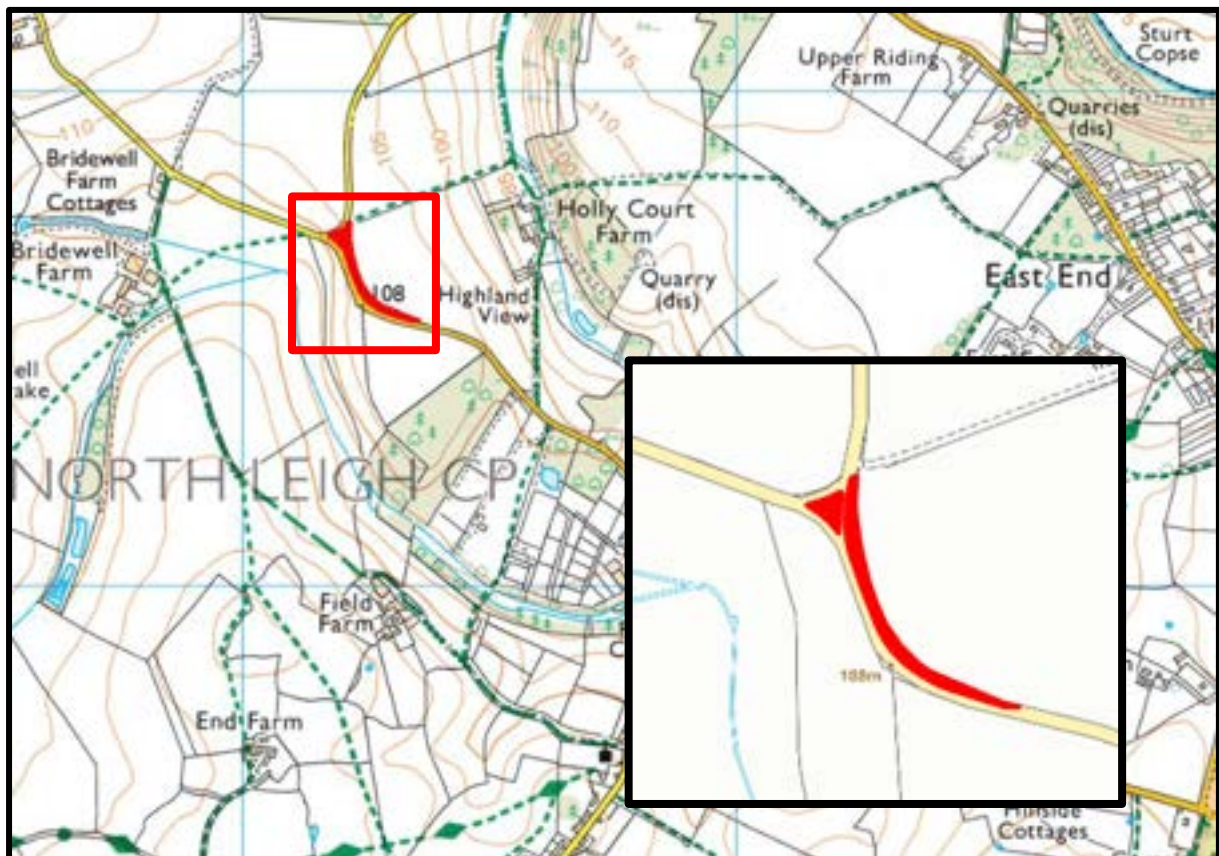
Installation of marker posts.



North (left) and South (right) sides of verge in 2016

Verge 38: Bridewell

Verge Name	Bridewell
Grid Reference	SP 381 147
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	North Leigh
Date of last survey	August 2016
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow and woodland



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Site Description

A west-facing verge and bank with good proportions of characteristic limestone species including Stemless thistle, Burnet Saxifrage, Wild Carrot and Pyramidal Orchid. A species of broomrape was also found, but not determined. The triangular area in the road junction also has limestone indicators including Salad Burnet and Common Restharrow as well as other species of unimproved meadows such as Field Scabious. This area also has less desirable species including Tall Fescue and Hogweed that indicate nutrient enrichment and / or reduced management.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within the Wychwood and Lower Evenlode Conservation Target Area.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

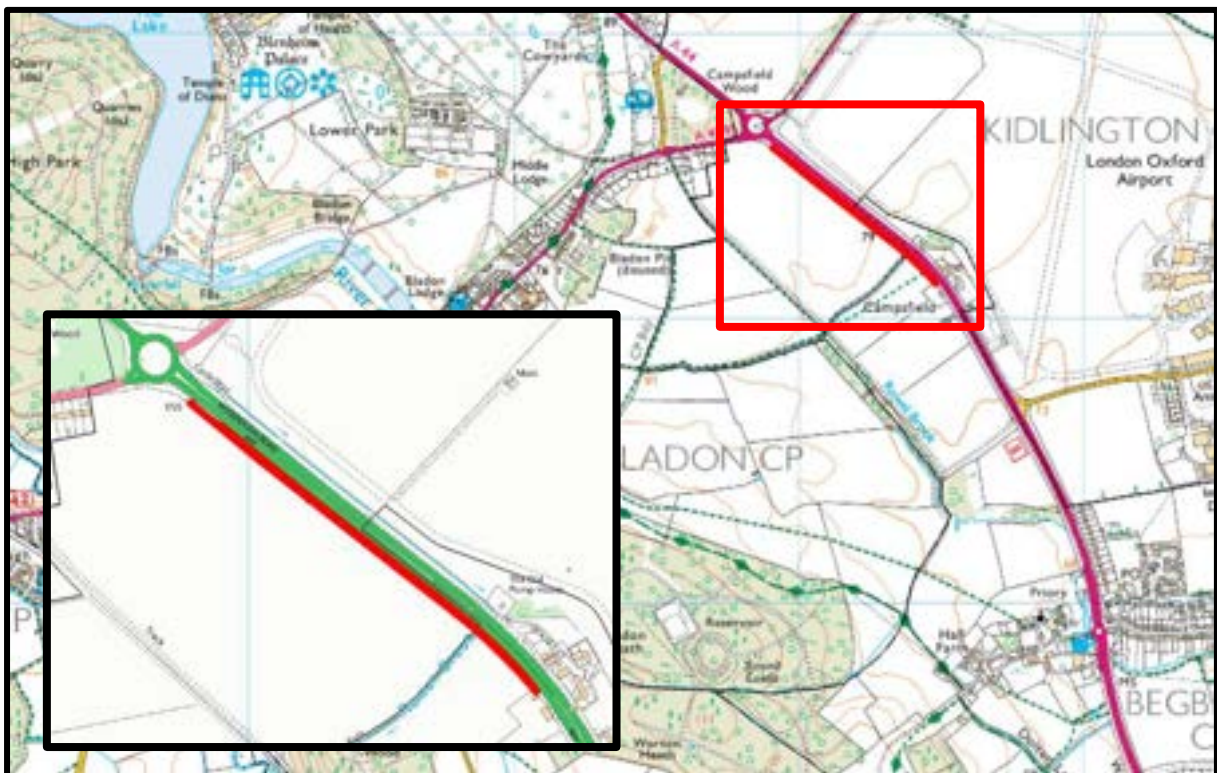
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2016

Verge 39: A44, Bladon

Verge Name	A44, Bladon
Grid Reference	SP 460 155
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kidlington and Begbroke
Date of last survey	June 2017
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch and wall



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Site Description

A wide, flat verge separated from A44 by a cycle path and narrow verge and bounded by a ditch bank and wall to the west side. Species recorded include field scabious, common restharrow and violet helleborine.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

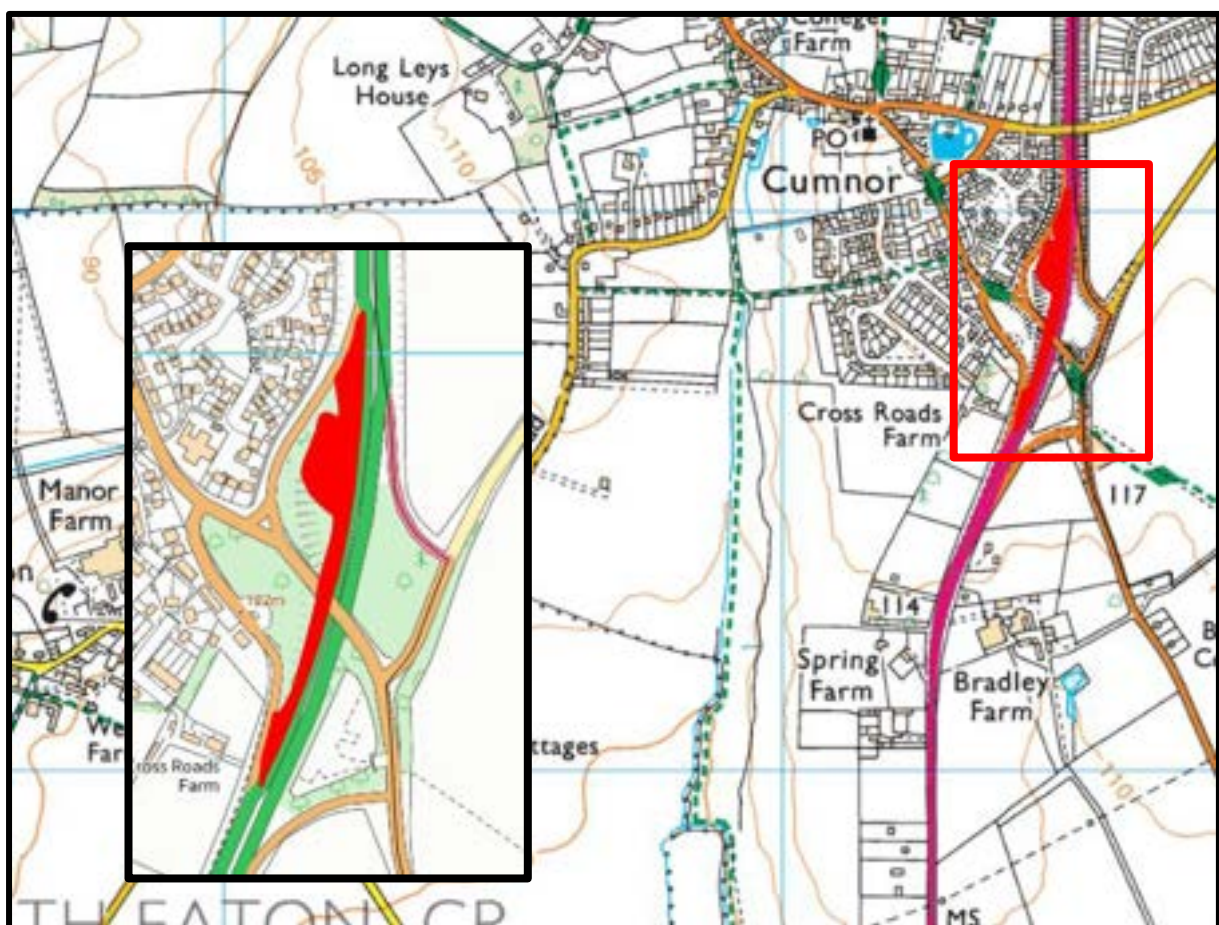
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 40: Cumnor

Verge Name	Cumnor
Grid Reference	SP 464 038
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	Cumnor
Date of last survey	July 2017
Approximate Length	50m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub and woodland



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Site Description

A wide verge adjacent to main A420 with species rich flora associated with limestone soil. Species recorded include fairy flax, pyramidal orchid, wild carrot, wild basil and wild parsnip.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Within Oxford Heights West Conservation Target Area, Long Copse and Pasture Near Chawley Local Wildlife Sites are ~900m to north-east. Cumnor Site of Special Scientific Interest is ~400m to the south; Hurst Hill SSSI is ~900m to the east.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

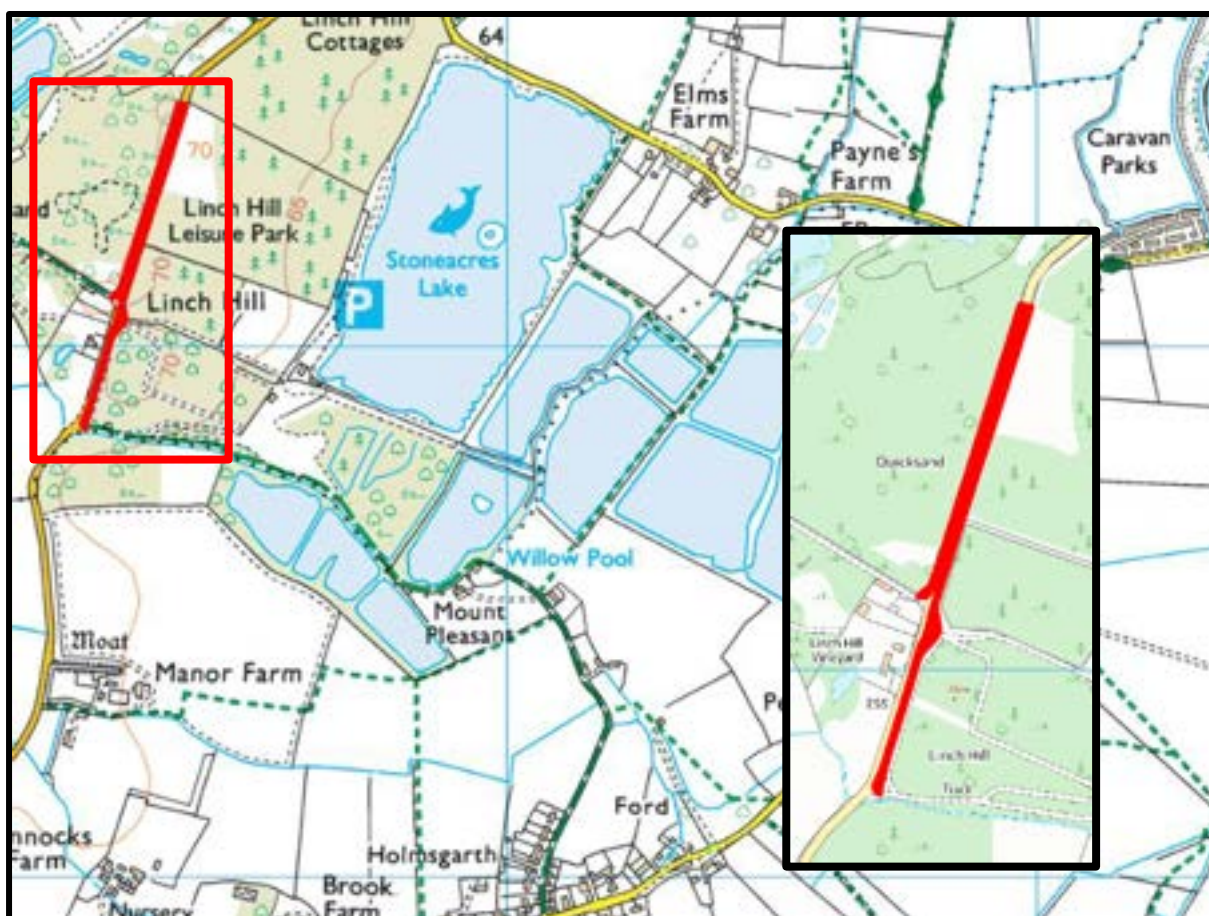
Scrub treatment and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 41: Linch Hill

Verge Name	Linch Hill
Grid Reference	SP 413 041
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Stanton Harcourt
Date of last survey	September 2016
Approximate Length	400m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland



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Site Description

A relatively flat verge adjacent to former sand quarries, on dry, calcareous soils. The verge is listed for the presence of the very rare Cotswold penny-cress. However a range of other species are also present including other rarities such as Dwarf thistle and Blue fleabane.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The site is within the Lower Windrush Valley Conservation Target Area, Dix Pit Local Wildlife Site is the nearest and is ~450m to the north-west.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

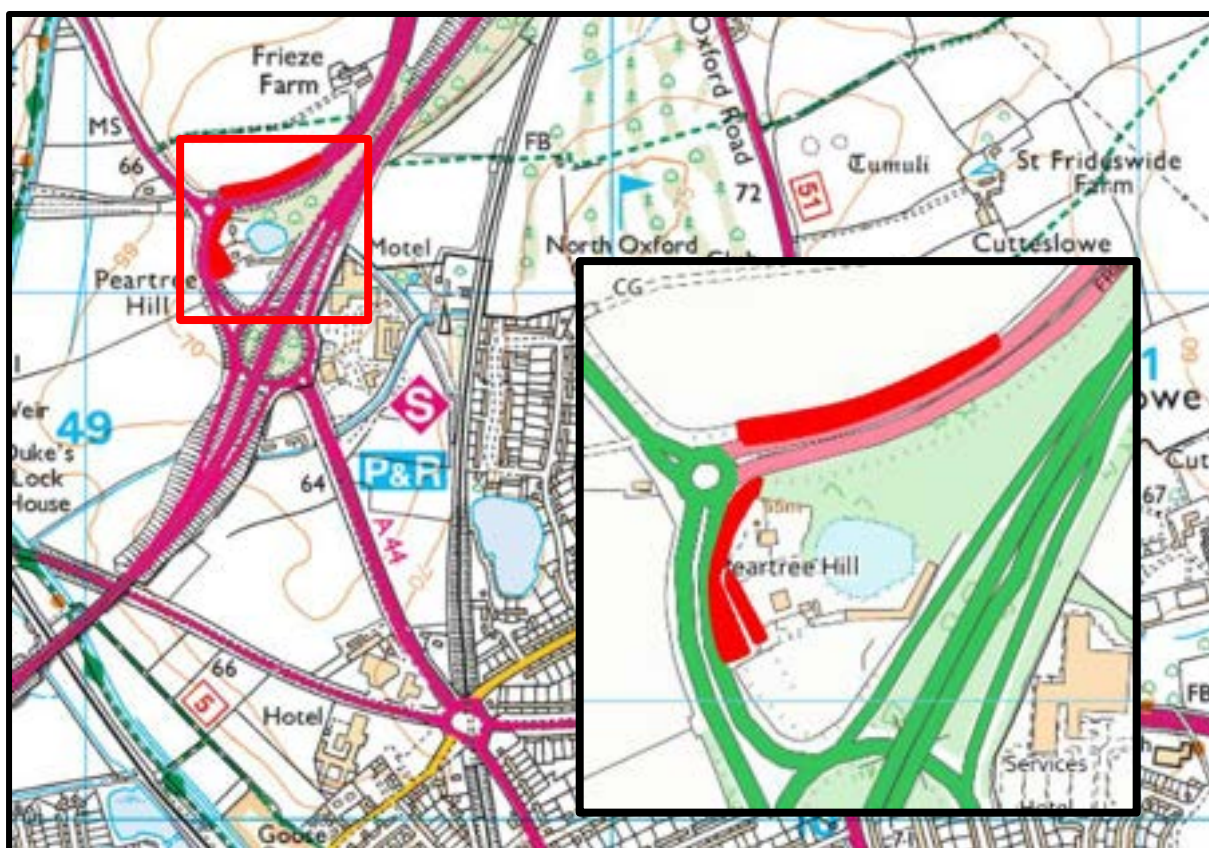
Installation of marker posts.



West (left) and east (right) sides of verge in 2016

Verge 42: Peartree

Verge Name	Peartree
Grid Reference	SP 492 111
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Gosford and Water Eaton
Date of last survey	June 2011
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent woodland and scrub



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Site Description

Two sections of verge supporting limestone grassland including pyramidal orchid, bee orchid and narrow-leaved bird's-foot trefoil.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

Part of the Nature Recovery Network core zone.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

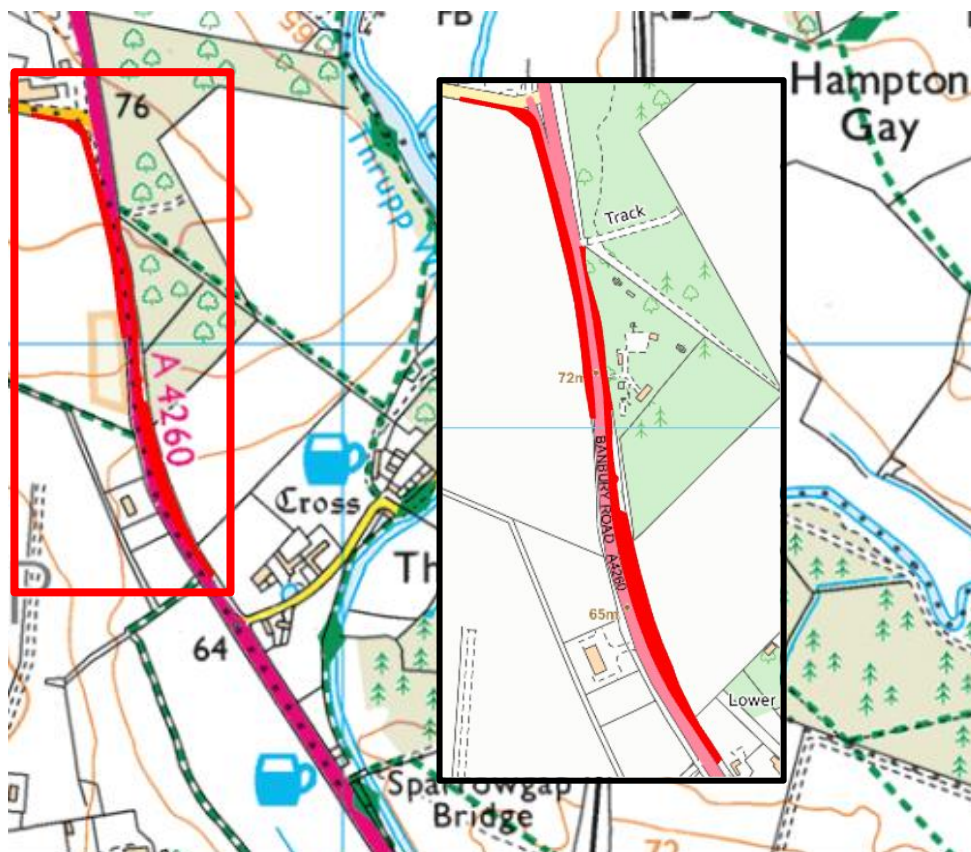
Installation of marker posts.



North (left) and south (right) sides of verge in 2022

Verge 43: A4260 Thrupp

Verge Name	A4260 Thrupp
Grid Reference	SP 477 160
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kiddlington
Date of last survey	June 2017
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow



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Site Description

Two sections of verge supporting limestone grassland including lizard orchid, field scabious, tormentil, lady's bedstraw, common broomrape and common restharrow.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located ~500m west of Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area and ~30m south-west of Langford Meadows Local Wildlife Site.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

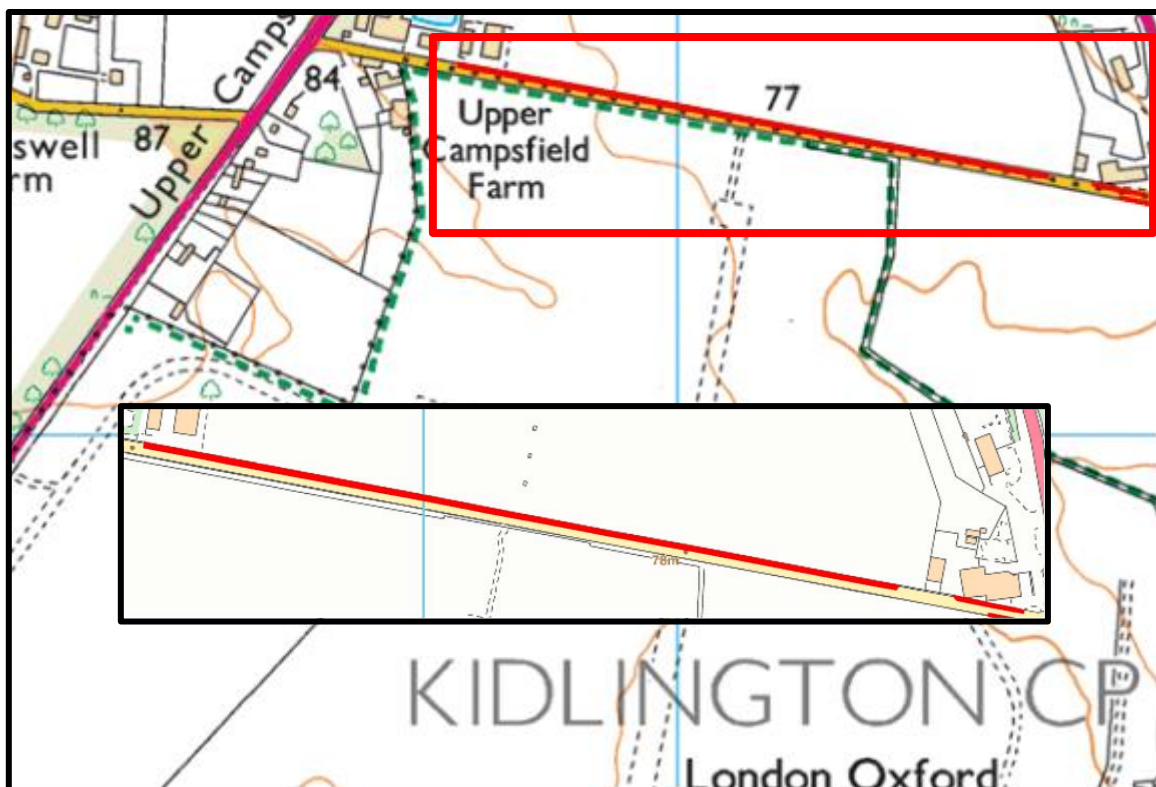
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 44: Straight Mile

Verge Name	Straight Mile
Grid Reference	SP 470 164
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Kiddlington
Date of last survey	June 2017
Approximate Length	800m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow with trees



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Site Description

A flat narrow verge supporting limestone grassland located between arable land and an airport. Species recorded include common retharrow, field scabious, common broomrape and lizard orchid.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located ~560m west of Lower Cherwell Valley Conservation Target Area with Bunkers Hill Quarry Local Wildlife Site to north-east and Langford Meadows Local Wildlife Site to the south.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 45: Adjacent Black Ley

Verge Name	Adjacent Black Ley
Grid Reference	SP 521 181
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Bletchington
Date of last survey	April 2017
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch, bank and hedgerow



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Site Description

A wide, flat verge supporting limestone grassland with a deep ditch, bank and hedgerow including several mature oak standards. Adjoining land to north is arable, with woodland located opposite the verge. Species recorded include early-purple orchid, tormentil, cowslip, meadow cranesbill, meadowsweet and wild angelica.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Kirtlington and Bletchington Parks and Woods Conservation Target Area and is adjacent Black Ley woodland Local Wildlife Site

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 46: Upper Campsfield Road

Verge Name	Upper Campsfield Road
Grid Reference	SP 467 167
Local Authority	Cherwell District Council
Parish	Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp
Date of last survey	July 2017
Approximate Length	100m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent ditch, hedgerow and scattered trees



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Site Description

A wide species rich verge characteristic of limestone grassland adjacent to arable land. Species recorded include field scabious, greater knapweed and frequent pyramidal orchids.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

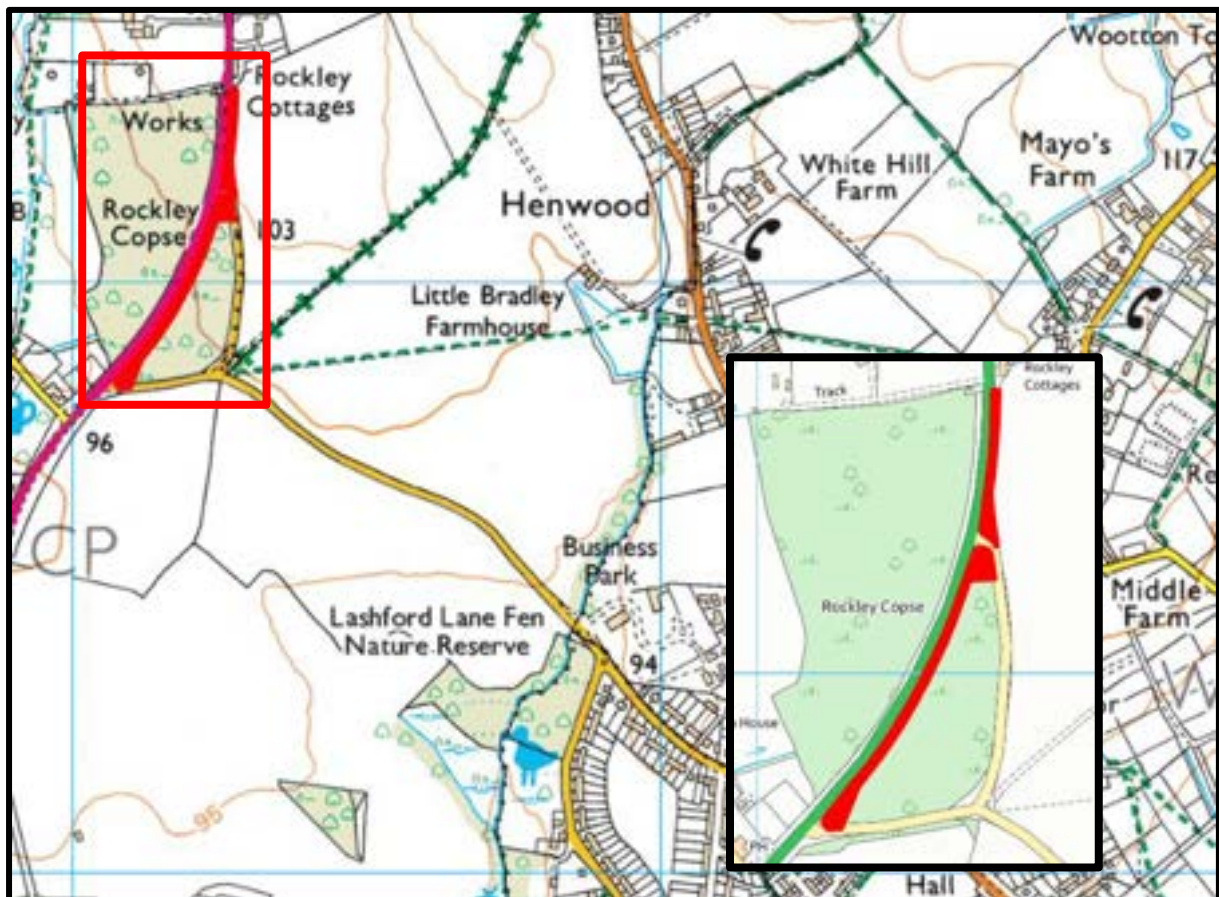
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2017

Verge 47: Rockley Copse

Verge Name	Rockley Copse
Grid Reference	SP 462 022
Local Authority	Vale of the White Horse District Council
Parish	Besselsleigh
Date of last survey	June 2022
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent treeline and dry stone wall



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Site Description

Rich flora dominated by dry, limestone grassland species including large populations of field scabious, common broomrape, pyramidal orchid and common calamint. Also present is greater knapweed, lady's bedstraw, hedge bedstraw, blue fleabane, hairy violet. Of note is the large population field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*) and dependant invertebrates, the large scabious mining bee (*Andrena hattorfiana*), brassy longhorn moth (*Nemophora metallica*) and its parasitoid Ichneumon wasp *Stilbops ruficornis*. The verge is backed by a dry-stone wall (collapsing in parts) which will provide refuge habitat for invertebrates using the verge flora.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Oxford Heights West CTA.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

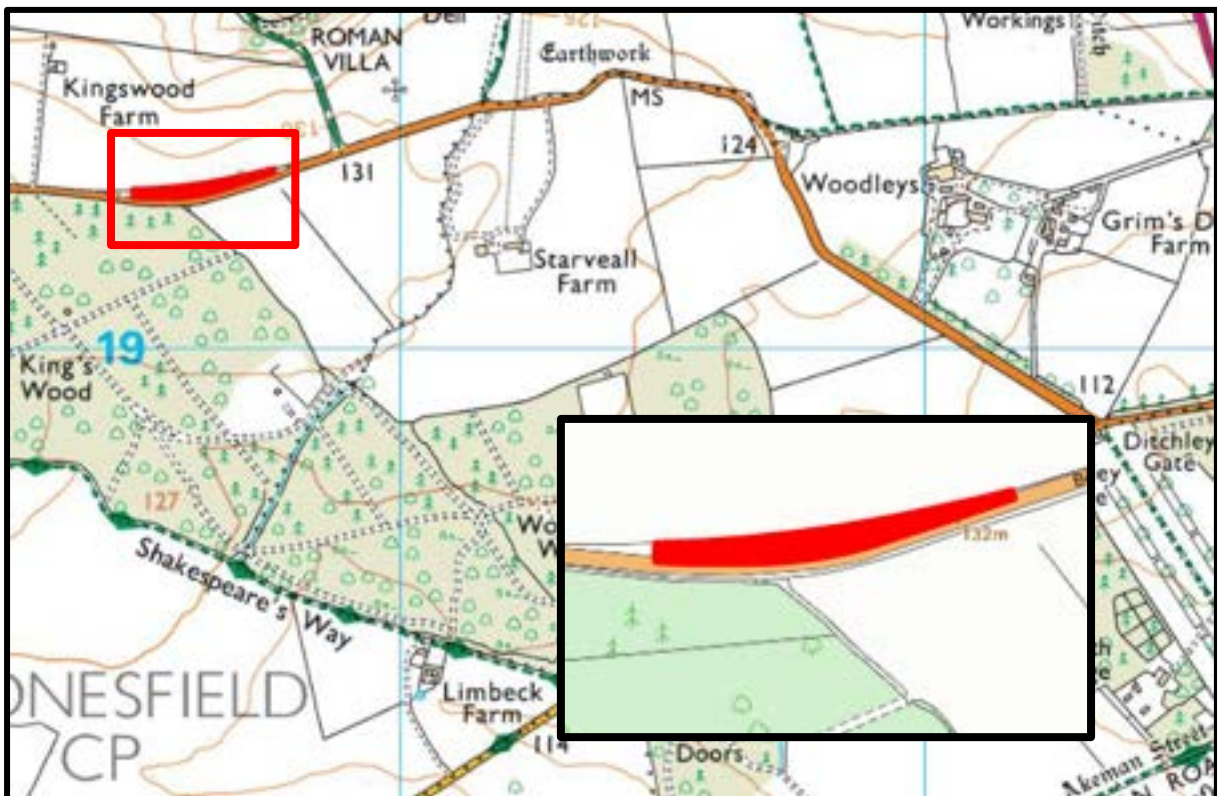
Installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2022

Verge 48: Stonesfield

Verge Name	Stonesfield
Grid Reference	SP 406 193
Local Authority	West Oxfordshire District Council
Parish	Stonesfield
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	250m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent hedgerow with trees



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Site Description

Rich flora dominated by dry, limestone grassland species including populations of agrimony, bluebells, pyramidal orchid and field scabious. Also present is greater knapweed, yellow rattle and dog's mercury. Of note is the large population of wild marjoram and hedge bedstraw.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

The verge is located within Blenheim and Ditchley Parks CTA and opposite King's Wood replanted ancient woodland.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

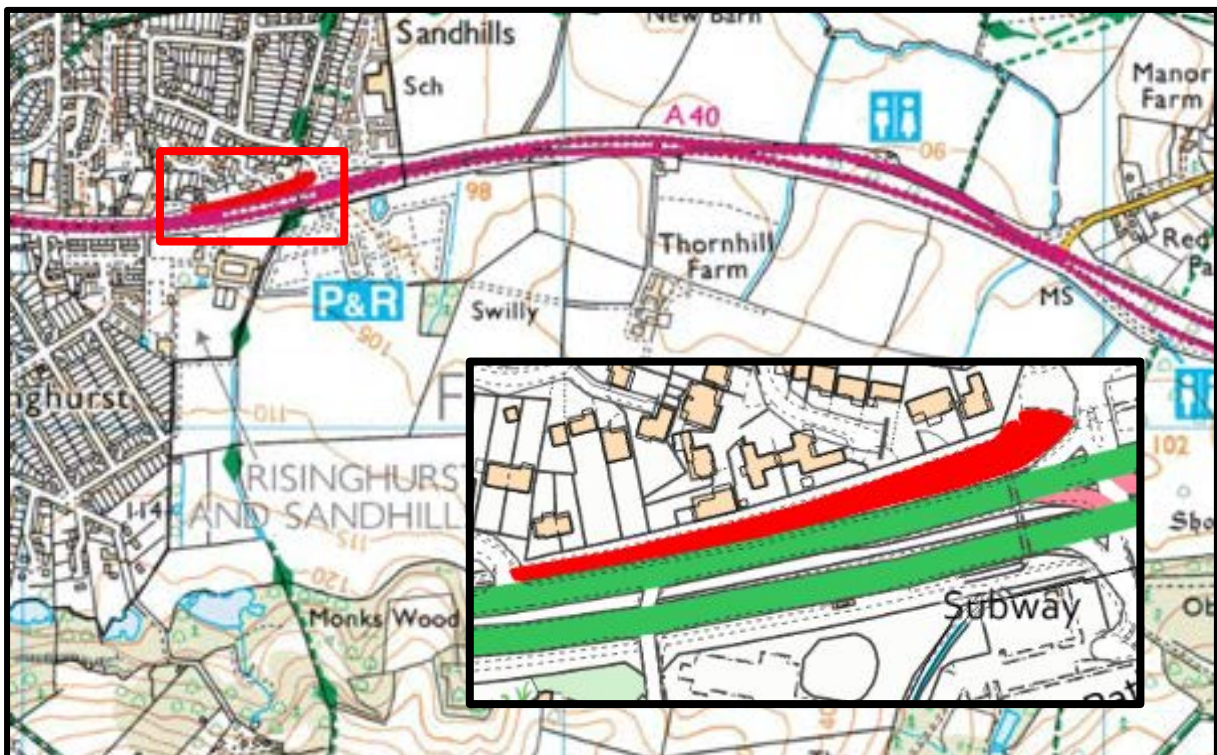
Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 49: A40 Sandhills

Verge Name	A40 Sandhills
Grid Reference	SP 565 074
Local Authority	Oxford City District Council
Parish	Risinghurst and Sandhills
Date of last survey	June 2021
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub and hedgerow with trees



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Site Description

Species rich limestone grassland including populations of quaking grass, pyramidal orchid, wild carrot, lady's bedstraw, field scabious, wild marjoram, common broomrape and lesser bird's-foot trefoil.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

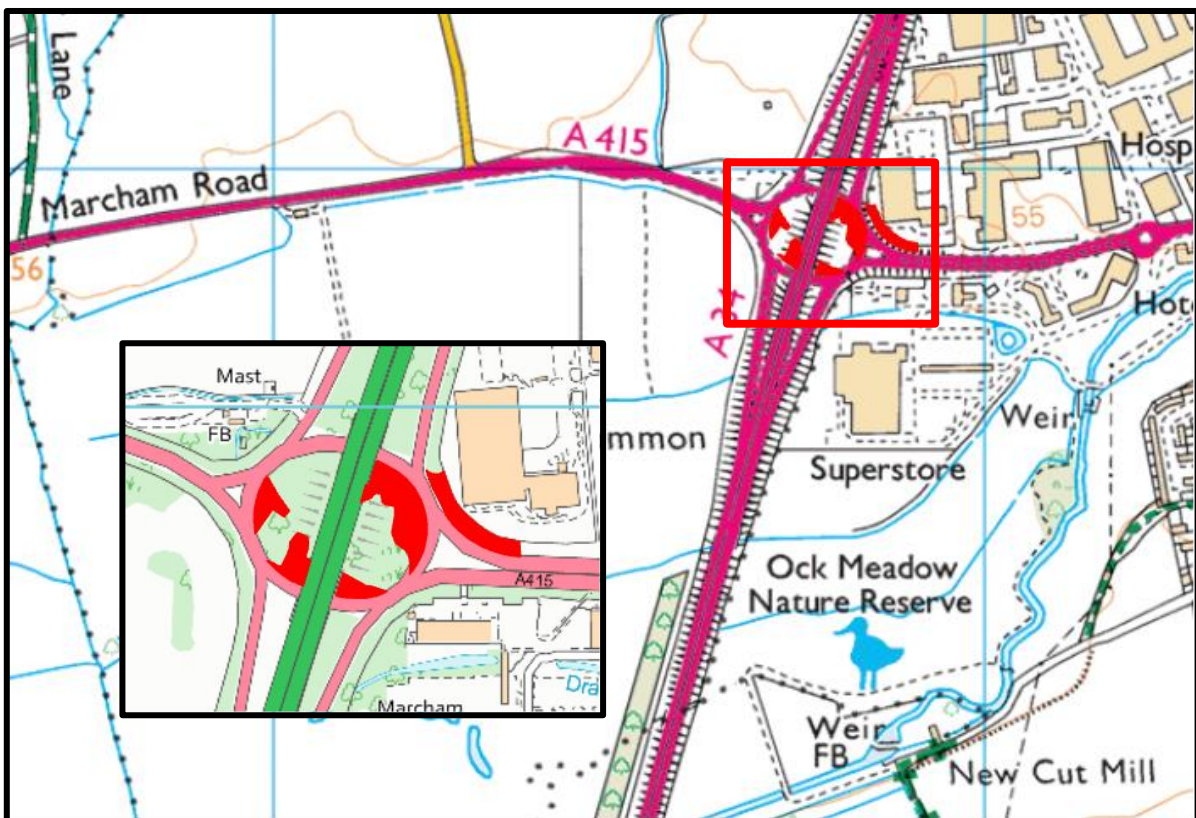
Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2022

Verge 50: Marcham Interchange

Verge Name	Marcham Interchange
Grid Reference	SU 477 969
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	St Helens Without and Abingdon on Thames
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	450m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Adjacent scrub, deciduous woodland and lines of trees



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Site Description

Consisting of five verge sections, the habitat consists of species rich limestone grassland including populations of fleabane, mullein, common broomrape, burnet saxifrage, common knapweed, glaucous sedge and meadowsweet. Of particular note is the large population of pyramidal orchids.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023

Verge 51: Milton Hill

Verge Name	Milton Hill
Grid Reference	SU 476 912
Local Authority	Vale of White Horse District Council
Parish	Milton
Date of last survey	June 2023
Approximate Length	200m
Key Habitat	Limestone Grassland
Features	Dry ditch with adjacent scrub and line of trees



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Site Description

Species rich limestone grassland including populations of sweet vernal grass, wild basil, pyramidal orchid, common spotted orchid, common restharrow and common toadflax.

Designations of Nature Conservation Interest

None.

Management Requirements

Annual cut and collect/pile in September.

Scrub control and installation of marker posts.



Overview of verge in 2023